



THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

Vol. III.

APRIL, 1925

1925

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

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(From April, 1922 to January, 1923)

ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY

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THE VISVĀ-BHARATI QUARTERLY

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No. 1

THE VOICE OF HUMANITY.

Address given at Milan

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Introductory Remarks by Prof. Formichi.

There is nobody but must realise the solemnity of this hour. A poet of world-wide reputation is here before us ; and among millions and millions of men of all continents, we few privileged people are enjoying the touch of his lofty personality. The world, the better part of the world, envies us to-day.

Master (this is the title that suits you best, for though you are, it is true, a poet above all, you are also a musician, a philosopher, a seer, a social reformer, an educator) Master ! we thank you for having come to Italy, where those who admire and love you are legion. They love you, —though you have not found out a new means of destruction to be resorted to in war, nor a new medicine to keep off death for the nonce, nor a new source of sensual enjoyment, nor a new way leading to a wider control over the forces of Nature ; they love you because you have founded in the heart of everyone of them an asylum of peace, a *Santiniketan* ; they love you because you have given them the spiritual joy of hearing, on God, on death, on life and love, your sublime thoughts expressed in sublime form.

Your time-honoured Rigveda says that language consists of four-fourths, all of which clever sages know well, but three-quarters of which they conceal and allow not to circulate, so that men speak only a fourth of the possible language :

Chatvārt vāk parimītā padāni
Tāni vidur Brāhmaṇā ye manisinah,
Guha trini gñhitaḥ manyayanti
Turiyam vācho manusya vadanti.

Far from following the example of those ancient seers, you have circulated among men the other three-quarters of language, and your words, worthiest expressions of the great mysteries, give us glimpses and intimations of immortality.

We do not expect that, like Krishna to Arjuna, you should reveal God sensibly to us, or that you should tell us the destiny of each one after death. Man is not and must not be allowed into the ultimate mystery of things. What he is expected to do is to approach as near as may be to that great mystery, with thoughts purified and strength drawn from the holiness of his own life. You have given us the example, and your song is the loftiest prayer that contemporary mankind can raise to the Highest.

Yours is not a mysticism irreconcilable with the acute sense of reality that we Western people inherit in our very blood ; it is not a message of renunciation, but rather an irresistible appeal to participate in the gifts, the allurements and the beauties of life ; to contribute, by means of the implement of Science, to the more and more rapid ascent of Civilisation.

I have read that to your Chinese friends in Burma you said : "My friends, never be afraid of life. Life must make its experiments, go through its mistakes. Don't try to keep yourselves secure from such blunders by remaining in your tombstones." You adore life, youth, work ; your message has been called a vernal one ; and it is a great piece of luck that the first Italian town to throw her doors open to you, is Milan, —full of life, never knowing weariness in work, ever raising her banner with enthusiasm for every great idea and deed.

Master, tell then to the Milanese your message of peace and of human brotherhood. We shall all listen to it as to the trumpet of a prophecy ; everyone of us, like the *udgátar* at the Soma sacrifice, exhorts you thus :

Asato má sad gamaya
 Tamaso má jyotir gamaya
 Mrtyor māmrtam gamaya.

*Let me pass from falsehood to truth,
 from darkness to light,
 from death to immortality.*

THE ADDRESS.

My friends, I have been waiting for this moment. When Prof. Formichi asked me to tell him what would be my subject this evening, I said I did not know; for you must understand that I am not a speaker. I am nothing better than a poet. When I speak, I speak *with* my surroundings and not *to* my surroundings. Now that I see your kind faces, your silent voice has reached my heart, and my voice will blend with it. When the heart wishes to pay its debt, it must have some coin with the stamp of its own realm upon it,—and that is our mother tongue. But I do not know your beautiful language, neither do you know mine. Since, therefore, that medium cannot be used for the commerce of thought and sentiment between you and myself, I have reluctantly to use the English language, which is neither yours nor mine. Therefore at the outset I ask you to forgive me,—those of you who do not know this language, as also those of you who do,—because my English is a foreigner's English.

Now I know what I am going to speak to you about. It will be in answer to the question as to what was the urging that brought me to you across the sea. In our language we have the expression *jágrata devatá*, the Divinity which is fully awake. For the soul of the individual, the Divine is not everywhere and always active. Only where our consciousness is illumined with love, does God act through our spirit. The shrine of the wakeful Divinity is there where the atmosphere of faith and devotion has been created by the meeting of generations of true worshippers. So our pilgrims in India are attracted to those places where, according to them, the divine spirit is active through the religious life and work of devotees.

Sometime in 1912 I felt such desire to make my pilgrimage to the shrine of humanity, where the human mind was fully awake, with all its lamps lighted, there to meet face to face the Eternal in man. It had occurred to me that this present age was dominated by the European mind, only because that mind was fully awake. You all know how the spirit of great Asia is going through an age-long slumber in the depth of night, with only a

few lonely watchers to read the stars and wait for the sign of the rising sun across the darkness. So, I had this longing to come to Europe and see the human spirit in the full blaze of its power and beauty. Then it was that I took that voyage,—my voyage of pilgrimage to Europe,—leaving for the moment my own work at Santiniketan and the children I loved.

But this was not my first visit to Europe. In the year 1878, when I was a boy, barely seventeen, I was brought over by my brother to these shores. It will be difficult for you to realise what visions we had in the East, in those days, of this great continent of Europe. Though I was young and though my knowledge of English was very insufficient, yet I had heard of her great poets and her heroes, of the ideal Europe of literature, so full of the love of freedom and of humanity.

Italy was my first introduction to Europe. In those days the steamers stopped at Brindisi and I still remember, when we reached the port, it was midnight under a full moon. I came rushing up on deck from my bed, and shall never forget that marvellous scene, enveloped in the silent mystery of the moon-light,—the sight of Europe asleep, like a maiden dreaming of beauty and peace.

It was fortunate for me that Brindisi was a small town, a quiet place, not so aggressively different from the scenes to which I had been accustomed from my childhood. I felt sure that its heart was open to me, to welcome the boy poet, who though young was even in those days a dreamer. I was greatly elated as I left the steamer to pass the night in what I suppose in these days of progress would be termed a third-rate hotel, having no electric light or other conveniences. I felt that I was in the arms of this great mother Europe and my heart seemed to feel the warmth of her breast.

The next day I woke, and with my brother and an Indian friend, wandered into an orchard close by, a garden of paradise which threatened no punishment against trespassers. Ah! what delight I had that morning in the limpid sun-light, in the

hospitality of leaf and fruit and flower. There was an Italian girl there, who reminded me of our Indian maidens, with eyes dark like bees, which have the power to explore the secret honey cells of love in the lotus of our hearts. (You know, with us the lotus is the emblem of the heart). She was a simple girl with a coloured kerchief round her head and a complexion not too white. That is, it was not a pallid lack of complexion. (I wish to be forgiven when I say that the complexion of whiteness is the complexion of the desert, not the complexion of life). Her's was like that of a bunch of grapes caressed by the warm kisses of the sun, the sun which had modulated the beauty of her face, giving it a tender bloom.

I need not dwell at length upon the feelings I experienced; it is enough to say that I was of the impressionable age of 17! I felt that I had come to a land of beauty, of repose and joy, which even at that time inspired my mind with the idea that one day I should claim its welcome for me.

With me it was a case of love at first sight; but for my companions it was but a fleeting moment, so that I was not free to stay, but had to continue the journey with my brother, who wanted me to hasten to my lessons in English. Being a truant by nature I had always refused to attend my classes, and thus having become a problem to my elders, they had decided to send me to England to learn under compulsion the language which, according to their notion, would give me the stamp of respectability.

England is a great country, and I pay my homage to the greatness of her people, but I must be excused if I did not appreciate it at the moment. For an Indian boy such as I was, left there alone in the depth of winter when the birds were silent and the sun so miserly with its gifts, the country seemed on every side like a visible spirit of rude refusal. I was homesick and extremely shy. I was frightened at the sombrely dressed people who stared at me. From my lodging house, facing Regent's Park, I would gaze with a feeling of bewilderment at its monotony of leaflessness, through the mists, the fogs, and the

drizzle. In a word, I was young,—too young to enter into the spirit of England at that time. I merely glanced at the surface of things with my distracted heart always yearning for its own nest across the sea.

After a few months' stay, I went back home to India. But I dare not here give a recital of my idle days, which followed, to those of you who are young, and for whom the example of a studiously strenuous life of usefulness would perhaps be more beneficial. I avoided all kinds of educational training that could give me any sort of standardised culture, stamped with a university degree. I dreamt, wrote verses, stories and plays, lived in solitude on the banks of the Ganges, and hardly knew anything of the movements and counter-movements of forces in the great world.

Whilst I was in the midst of my creative work, there came to me an inner message asking me to come out of my seclusion and seek life in the heart of the crowd. I knew not what I could do. I had a love for children, so that I called them round me, in order to rescue them from the dismal dungeons of the educational department, and find for them that atmosphere of sympathy and freedom which they needed most. I chose a beautiful and secluded spot where in collaboration with Mother Nature it was possible to bring up these boys in a spirit of wisdom and love.

While I was still busy doing service to children I do not know what possessed me all of a sudden. From some far away sky came to me a call of pilgrimage reminding me that we are all born pilgrims,—pilgrims of this green earth. A voice questioned me: "Have you been to the sacred shrine where Divinity reveals itself in the thoughts and dreams and deeds of Man?" I thought possibly it was in Europe where I must seek it, and know the full meaning of my birth as a human being in this world. And so for the second time I came to this continent.

But, meanwhile, I had grown up and learnt much of the history of man. I had sighed with the great poet Wordsworth

who became sad when he saw what man had done to man. We too have suffered at the hands of man,—not tigers and snakes, not elemental forces of nature, but human beings. Men are ever the greatest enemy of Man. I had felt and known it; all the same, there was a hope, deep in my heart, that I should find some place, some temple, where the immortal spirit of man dwelt hidden like the sun behind clouds.

Yet, when I arrived in the land of my quest, I could not stop the insistent question which kept troubling me with a sense of despair: “Why is it that Europe with all her power of mind is racked with unrest? How is it that she is overcome with such a whirlwind of suspicion and jealousy and greed? Why is it that her greatness itself offers a vast field for fiercely contending passions to have their devil-dance in the lurid light of conflagration?”

When I travelled from Italy to Calais I saw the beautiful scenery on both sides of the railway. These men, I thought, have the ability to love their soil; and what a great power is this love! How they have beautified and made fruitful the whole continent with heroic sacrifice! With the force of their love they have fully won their country for themselves, and this ever-active service of their devotion, for generations, has given rise in them to an irresistible power. For love is the highest human truth and truth gives fulness of life. The earth is overwhelmed by it, not because of man’s covetousness, but because of this life-giving shower of heart and mind that he has poured around him. How he has struggled to eradicate the obstinate barrenness from the inert! How he has fought and defeated at every step the evil in everything that was hostile in his surroundings! Why then this dark misery lowering over Europe, why this widespread menace of doom in her sky?

Because the love for her own soil and children will no longer suffice for her. So long as destiny offered to her only a limited problem, Europe did more or less satisfactorily solve it. Her answer was patriotism, nationalism,—that is to say, love only for that and those to whom she happened to be related. Accord-

ing to the degree of truth in this love she has reaped her harvest of welfare. But to-day, through the help of science, the whole world has been given to her for a problem. How to answer it in the fulness of truth she has yet to learn. Because the problem has become vast, the wrong answer is fraught with immense danger.

A great truth has been laid bare to you, and according to your dealing with it, you will attain the fulfilment of your destiny. If you do not have the strength to accept it in the right spirit, your humanity will rapidly degenerate; your love of freedom, love of justice, love of truth, love of beauty, will wither at the root; and you will be rejected of God.

Do you not realise how a rigid ugliness is everywhere apparent,—in your cities, in your commerce, the same monotonous mask,—so that nowhere is there room for a living expression of the spirit? This is the creeping in of death, limb by limb, in the body of your civilisation.

Love can be patient. Beauty is moulded and matured by patience. Your great artists knew it in the days when they could gladly modulate all the riches of their leisure into some tiny detail of beauty. The greedy man can never do this. Factories are the triumph of ugliness, for no one has the patience to try to give them the touch of grace; and so, everywhere in God's world to-day, we are faced with what is called progress, a progress towards inhospitable ugliness, towards the eddy of a bottomless passion which is voracity. Can you call to mind any great voice speaking out of the human heart in these modern days?

We have no doubt reason to be proud of Science. We offer to Europe our homage in return for her gift of science, now bequeathed to posterity. Our sages have said: "The Infinite has to be known and realised. For man, the Infinite is the only true source of happiness." Europe has come face to face with the Infinite in the world of extension, the domain of external Nature.

I do not cry down the material world. I fully realise that this is the nurse and the cradle of the Spirit. By achieving the Infinite in the heart of the material world you have made this world more generous than it ever was. But merely coming to a rich fact does not give us the right to own it. The great Science which you have discovered still awaits your meriting. Through what you have gained outwardly you may become successful, but you may miss greatness in spite of the success.

Because you have strenuously cultivated your mind in Europe, because of your accuracy of observation and the development of your reasoning faculties, these discoveries you have undoubtedly deserved. But discoveries have to be realised by a complete humanity,—Knowing has to be brought under the control of Being,—before Truth can be fully honoured. But our Being, the fundamental reality in the human world, with which all other truths have to be brought into harmony at any cost, is not within the domain of Science. Truth when not properly treated turns back on us to destroy us. Your very science is thus becoming your destroyer.

If you have acquired a thunderbolt for yourself, you must earn the right arm of a god to be safe. You have failed to cultivate those qualities which would give you full sovereign right over science and therefore you have missed peace. You cry for peace, and only build another frightful machine, some new powerful combination. Quiet may be imposed by outside compulsion for a time, but Peace comes from the inner spirit, from the power of sympathy, the power of self-sacrifice,—not of organisation.

I have great faith in humanity. Like the sun it can be clouded, but never extinguished. I admit that at this time when the human races have met together as never before, the baser elements appear predominant. The powerful are exulting at the number of their victims. They take the name of science to cultivate the school-boy superstition that they have certain physical signs indicating their eternal right to rule, as the explosive force of the earthquake once might have claimed, with

enough of evidence, its never-ending sway over the destiny of this earth. But they in their turn will be disappointed.

Their's is the cry of a past that is already exhausted, a past that has thrived upon the exclusive spirit of national individualism which will no longer be able to keep the balance in its perpetual disharmony with its surroundings. Only those races will prosper who, for the sake of their own perfection and permanent safety, are ready to cultivate the spiritual magnanimity of mind that enables the soul of man to be realised in the heart of all races.

For men to come near to one another, and yet to continue to ignore the claims of humanity, is a sure process of suicide. We are waiting for the time when the spirit of the age will be incarnated in a complete human truth and the meeting of men will be translated into the Unity of Man.

I have come to your door seeking the voice of humanity, which must sound its solemn challenge and overcome the clamour of the greedy crowd of slave-drivers. Perhaps it is already being uttered in whispers behind closed doors, and will grow in volume till it bursts forth in a thundering cry of judgment, and the vulgar shout of brute force is silenced in awe.

TO ITALIA.

By RABINDRANATH.

I said to thee: "O Queen,
Like many other lovers, who have brought their gifts to thy feet,
I have come, as a lark at the gate of Dawn, only to sing to thee
and then to go."
From thy window thou spakest to me through thy veil:
"Now it is winter, my sky is dark, my garden without flowers."

I said to thee: "O Queen,
I have brought my reed from the eastern shore
Waiting to play to the light of thy dark eyes,
Open to me thy veil."
Thou saidst in answer: "Go back, my impatient poet,
For I have not yet decked myself in colours.
In the sweet month of May,
When I sit on my flower throne, I shall ask thee to my side."

I said to thee: "O Queen,
My journey has borne rich fruit in thy words of hope.
Floated on the breeze of Spring the magic of thy call to me
Will burst in flowers in our far away forest.
I shall seek back my path to thy window
On some sunny day, drunken with the fragrance of roses and
humming with bees' wings.
To-day, while I take my leave and go back, I sing:
"Victory to thee!"

DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AMONG THE INDO-ARYANS.

By PROF. STEN KONOW.

Introduction (concluded).

The Aryans have become the leaders of the civilisation and of the religious development of India. But, as we have already seen, they were not always settled in the country, having entered it as conquerors.

We do not know when this conquest took place. Indian scholars have sometimes been inclined to push it back into a very distant past, untold millenniums before the beginning of the Christian era. Thereby they have overlooked one certain fact, *viz* : that the Indian Aryans are derived from the same common stock as most European nations, and that the history of none of them can with certainty be referred to an earlier period than say about 2,000 years B. C.

The prevailing theory in Europe has gone to the other extreme and tried to fix a low limit, about the middle of the second millenium B. C., as the date of the Aryan conquest of India. This theory has taken its stand on certain remarks made by the late German scholar, Max Muller.

As you know, one of the landmarks in Indian chronology is the appearance of Gautama, the Buddha, in the sixth century B. C. In his days the vast Vedic literature was already in existence. Within this literature Max Muller distinguished different periods, one comprising the Samhitás, another represented by the Bráhmaṇas and a third which produced the Sûtras; and suggested, as a working hypothesis, that we might assign about 200 years to each of these, and a fourth period of the same duration to the settlement and first development of Aryan civilisation in India. But he took care to emphasise the hypothetical nature of the whole theory and added that nobody would be able to tell whether the oldest Vedic hymn had been actually composed 1000, 1500, 2000 or 3000 years B. C.

Max Muller's successors have been less careful, and in Europe it has often been taken for granted that Vedic civilisa-

tion is not older than about 1500 B. C. You will, however, see at once how weak the foundation is on which the theory has been built up. It is little more than a mere guess.

In opposition to this theory we have another, independently started in India by the late scholar and patriot, Tilak, and in Europe by Prof. Jacobi. They both take their stand on certain indications of an astronomical nature in the Vedas, from which they draw the conclusion that the period of Indo-Aryan civilisation must reach back to the middle of the 5th millennium, and that the oldest Indian book, the Rigveda was composed during the latter half of a period of two thousand years which begun then. I do not myself understand anything about astronomy. It seems to me, however, that the arguments of Tilak and Jacobi carry great weight, and at all events their theory is the only one which is based on scientific reasons.

I therefore accept the period of say the 3rd millennium as the time during which the oldest Indo-Aryan songs were composed though it must be admitted that the proofs are not decisive. There is, moreover, one other consideration which strongly warns us not to assign too late a date to Vedic civilisation.

In Boghazkeni in Cappodocia, far away in the very heart of Asia Minor, have been found numerous clay tablets containing various documents of the Hetite empire. One of these documents is a treaty of peace between the Hetite king and the ruler of the Mitani people in Mesopotamia, dating from the 14th century B.C. The two kings have been at war with each other; now they conclude peace, and the peace is to be strengthened through a matrimonial alliance between the two royal houses. In the treaty the gods of the two peoples are invoked, and among the Mitani gods we suddenly find, after a number of strange names, four well-known Indian gods: Mitra, Varuna, Indra and the Násatyas.

This document has been much discussed, and some scholars have believed that the four deities are not Indian, but common Aryan gods, such as were worshipped by the Aryans before they split up into the two different branches, Indian and Iranian.

This view cannot, however, be correct. There are no

traces of an Iranian Varuna. That name of the great Asura is only known from Indian sources, though the conception covered by the name has its root in pre-Indian times. Indra's name is also known from Iranian sources, but it seems to be absolutely certain that Indra did not rise to the prominent position of protector and leader of the Aryan people in war, before the Aryans entered India, and the mention of Indra's name in the treaty is, as we shall presently see, only intelligible under the supposition that he was worshipped as the god of war. Finally the Násatyas are mentioned in the treaty as a divine couple, just as in the Vedas, while Iranian tradition does not speak of more than one Násatya, or as he is called in the Avesta, Náonhaipya.

In order to be able to judge about the evidence presented by these names, we shall have to examine why exactly these gods are mentioned in the treaty. It is evident that they must have been considered as standing for something which was of importance in connection with the treaty itself, and in the case of Mitra, Varuna and Indra the reason is apparent. Mitra was the guardian of pacts and agreements, and Varuna is *dhrtavarta*, he through whose power promises and oaths become binding. Mitra and Varuna are accordingly mentioned because they were the gods who stood behind every treaty, every solemn engagement. And Indra must have been the Indra of the Vedic Aryans, who had protected his people during the war; and whose sanction was necessary in order that the war might cease.

But what about the Násatyas? The explanation of the mentioning of these gods can only be given from the point of view of Vedic India. In the tenth book, one of the latest, of the Rigveda, they are praised as the guardians of the nuptial procession. And, it being stated in the treaty that the peace was to be followed up by a matrimonial alliance, it is evident that the reason why the Násatyas were invoked was exactly their position as best men to the bride.

We can accordingly infer from the Mitani treaty that the Mitani people had come under the influence of Indian civilisation, such as it appears in the later days of the Rigvedic period. And as the date of the treaty is the 14th century B.C., we must necessarily infer that the Aryans had been settled in India long

before that date; in other words, that the Aryan conquest must have been taken place long before the date assigned to it in the theory held by many European scholars.

The history of the Aryans in India is accordingly a very long one, and a review of the religious development of the Indo-Aryans will have to cover a period of about 5000 years. During these long centuries the Aryans came into contact with the older races inhabiting India, brought them under their sway and gradually became their leaders and teachers, in civilisation as well as in religious thought, till they all came to be more or less Aryanized.

But this Aryanizing was not effected by force, nor in such a way that the old inhabitants had to give up all their old notions and ideas and adopt the Aryan ones instead. To a great extent they went on worshipping in their traditional way, only replacing the names of their old gods by the Aryan ones. And the Aryans were wise enough to tolerate this state of things, and even to do their best to assist such development. There is a well-known tale about an aboriginal tribe who worshipped the boar. When it became Aryanized, it went on worshipping the boar, but the Brahmans taught them to see in him the Varāha Avatar of Vishnu, and thereupon to call him Vishnu.

Similar transformations have happened over and over again during the history of the Indian peoples. And in this way the conquerors learnt to look on their old enemies as people belonging to their own religious community, and the conquered races gradually absorbed the higher religious ideas of the Aryans. These amalgamated religious notions and the resulting common civilisation became strong ties which bound the whole population together, not as one nation, but rather as parts of a great all-comprising society. And as the Aryans were the spiritual leaders, who organised this large society and arranged it in classes and castes, and who also rearranged the religious systems of the older inhabitants, the whole ensemble got an Aryan stamp, in spite of all the different elements which had contributed to its composition.

It is a long period which we shall, in this way, have to cover. But we cannot be content to start our analysis from the Aryan

conquest of India. The conquerors did not enter the country as a new people, without any religious inheritance. Before they came, they had lived for centuries together with other Aryans, the ancestors of the later Iranians. And the old Aryans of that pre-Indian period were not uncivilized barbarians. They had already developed a certain organisation of the state, with petty kings, who were again subject to a paramount sovereign, or Samráj. And their religious ideas had reached a state of development where the organisation of the state and certain legal institutions had left their stamp. In a word, the Indo-Aryans had inherited a religious system which they brought to India and developed and modified in their new home.

Even the ancient Aryans, the ancestors of the Indo-Aryans and the Iranians, had passed through a long development. They were descended from a still older people, the ancestors of most European nations, the so-called Indo-European or Indo-Germanic tribe or tribes. These names are given to this ancient people by modern scholars in consideration of the fact that the southernmost descendants of the common stock are found in India, and the northernmost in Europe, more specially in Norway, a country inhabited by Germanic tribes,—Germanic being the wider term which comprises not only the Germans but also the other Teutonic races : the peoples of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, of Holland and parts of Belgium and of England.

Even the old Indo-Europeans had their own organisation and some distinct religious notions which can be traced behind the conceptions of the various Indo-European peoples, in the same way as inferences are drawn regarding the character of the Indo-European language from the speeches of the different branches of the family.

We must, therefore, extend our researches beyond the period of the Indo-Aryan conquest and try to find out the different substrata : in the first place the heritage which the Indo-Aryans, received from the older Aryans ; in the second, the still more ancient Indo-European elements in the belief of the Aryans.

We have accordingly to distinguish three different stages in the history of Indo-Aryan religions : an old Indo-European

stage, a later Aryan one, and, finally the Indian stage. With regard to the two former we have no direct sources, no old books or religious documents. We can do nothing more than draw certain inferences. Such notions as are common to the Indo-Aryans and the Iranians are probably inherited from common Aryan ancestors, and where we find a general agreement in conceptions, or ideas, or even in designations, among several members of the Indo-European family, we seem justified in speaking of an Indo-European mentality, an Indo-European religion.

On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that our sources are more extensive than might appear at first sight.

To begin with, we naturally concentrate our attention on the ancient religious literature of the different peoples and base certain conclusions on it. The picture which we are able thus to draw is, however, very incomplete, and not always correct. Religious literature is nowhere in the world a true exponent of the people's mentality, or even of their deeper religious conceptions and feelings. It is saturated with myths and poetical fiction and replete with allegorical and fugitive embellishments which do not mean the same thing to us as they did to the original authors.

There is, however, another source from which we can derive some knowledge of bygone times. Popular customs, ceremonies and conceptions are often preserved with remarkably little change from generation to generation. And a careful critical analysis of the material which can be pieced together from these sources, often leads to important results. This branch of study has been much cultivated during the last decennium, and a great deal of material has been brought together from widely different parts of the globe. It is however necessary to proceed with the utmost care and circumspection. Our methods are still far from being sufficiently developed and certain.

By a proper analysis of all such sources we shall some day be able to draw a much fuller picture of Indo-European and Aryan religious belief than it is possible to-day. In these lectures I shall only be able to make some few remarks, concentrating my attention chiefly on the Indian period, and even

there relying mainly on literary sources. And inasmuch as this restricted field is still very wide, I can only hope to be able to draw the broad outlines.

Religion is, it should be remembered, a very complicated thing. It is not enough to examine the more or less learned discussions of the leading religious thinkers. That would only lead to a survey of the development of the higher Indian theology. The charm which attracts the scholar to the study of Indian religions, however, does not lie only in the fact that India has fostered deeper and finer religious conceptions than the remaining Asiatic countries; it is derived as well from the unbroken religious continuity which enables us to follow the development from primitive beginnings up to the highest perfection, to see how elementary, one might almost be tempted to say savage, ideas have been preserved and at the same time raised into a higher sphere. This development leads us to think that religion is not the creation of a high civilisation on the basis of a primitive human instinct, but that it is an eternal truth adapting itself to all stages of civilisation and development, without any shifting of its fundamental base.

It will be known to you how various scholars have attempted, in different ways, to give a definition of what we have to understand by the word religion. It is taken from the Latin language, and the old Romans were already trying to explain it. They tried to connect it with the verb *religare*, to bind, and explain it as that which bound man to do his duty towards a higher power,—the gods. A similar idea is embodied in the Indian word *dharma*, from *dhr*, to hold. Dharma is our duty, our one firm hold amidst the vicissitudes of phenomenal existence, it is *Satya*, the eternal truth, that which is *sat*, really and permanently existing, not merely coming into existence. And though it does not explain anything, we may rest content with this definition.

There is, in every religious belief, a vague sense of man's inability to lead his life independently, by his own force. Everywhere he is faced with powers and potencies which he cannot master, but which he tries to conciliate and utilize. Behind these powers some may imagine mighty beings,

accustomed as they are to see that powerful chiefs can do things that they themselves are incapable of achieving. In that case they will believe in some god, perhaps in many gods, and then we call their religion polytheism; or where the belief is definitely in one single god, we speak of it as monotheism. Others again, may think of the divine power as a universal force pervading the whole world, and then we call such belief pantheism. There are also many peoples who do not believe in gods, and yet have a religion. The reports of tribes devoid of all religious belief are due to misunderstanding, to the failure to grasp the mentality of strange races.

Much has been written and said about the so-called animism, the belief in ghosts and spirits. It has been mentioned that this belief is chiefly derived from the phenomena accompanying death. Something disappears from the body, which is left behind, apparently a lifeless form, which rots and decays. But the deceased cannot have disappeared and ceased to exist. He occasionally reappears in visions, or in dreams, or only in the mind, and to primitive man such occurrences are real. Therefore man continues to live after death, in a different way and apart from his old body. And his power still remains for good or for evil, so that he is fed and worshipped. All the world over we find various forms of the worship of deceased ancestors, and here in India it plays a considerable part in the religious life of the people.

In man's worship we also find numerous magic rites aiming at utilizing the energy of Nature and the faculties of Man in different ways, and here we can already trace the belief in force, or power, or the different faculties, as entities which can be used in different ways for good or for evil. Such faculties or powers moreover, are not only found in man. They are also observable in numerous animals. The cow gives us food, she is the source of a mystic power which gives us life and strength. The tiger is in possession of wild dangerous strength, the poisonous snake has the power of the quick bite that kills in an instant.

Man may therefore wish to come into possession of such powers, and we frequently find that he tries to do so by means of magic rites and ceremonies. Sometimes we are told that he

tries to enter into a close alliance with some animal, a kind of marriage. And often we see that certain families or certain tribes believe in an intimate relation between themselves and some animal. We call such a belief Totemism,—from a word borrowed belonging to the language of the American Algonkins. The animals and the members of the group are brothers, they do not kill or hurt each other. The animal is their totem, and they themselves are such animals.

The mystic power can also be found in things which are, to all appearances, lifeless. In trees, in fire, or in water we can still speak of a certain kind of life. But human imagination does not rest there. The useful implement, made by man, is conceived to be the bearer of mystic power and may as such be worshipped. And such a force, it is supposed, can, through magic rites, be instilled into the most different things, even stones,—such objects being called fetishes, a word coined by the Portuguese and applied to various objects of worship which are considered as bearers of hidden power. It is therefore common to speak of this form of worship, in which the sorcerer plays a prominent rôle, as Fetishism.

Such power, as I have already indicated, can also be considered as a separate entity, with its own independent life and activity. The Polynesians and Melanesians speak of *mana*, a mystical power that can bring about things which are beyond the power of ordinary men. It may be found in human beings and in the most different objects, and it manifests itself in various effects which can only be explained through its presence. The skilful hunter is successful, the valiant chief is victorious, because he is filled with *mana*; and even a stone of a curious shape, *e.g.* one resembling a fruit, may be filled with *mana* and increase the fertility of a fruit tree when hidden in the ground at its root.

Similar ideas are held by other tribes in other parts of the world. The Iroquese speak of *orenda*, and think for instance, that if a hunter is unsuccessful, the reason must be that the *orenda* of the animal is stronger than his own; the Algonkins know this power under the name of *manitu*, the South Indians call it *wakonda*, and so forth. Such mystic forces are often con-

sidered as some kind of emanation from the person or thing in which they are found. It is then deemed dangerous to approach such person or thing, they are deemed sacro-sanct or *taboo*, as the Polynesians say, and if one happens to come into contact with them, the evil results must be avoided by means of magic rites of different descriptions.

It will be seen that religious belief has many forms and shapes, and he would be rash who would try to find a general formula competent to cover them all.

Throughout, however, we find that deep feeling of dependency on mystic forces, which leads man to worship. He may try by various magic means to escape from the evil effects of such mystic power, or to strengthen it for his own benefit. And here we have the explanation of the strong position of the sorcerer, the *shaman*, or medicine-man. When the belief in these uncontrollable powers takes a personal form, we find man prostrating himself in prayer before his gods, or trying to win their favour by hymns, or by sacrifice.

In spite of the multifariousness of the forms, behind them all we everywhere find the inborn sense of the presence of a greater power before which man feels impelled to bow down. And in a higher stage of development this feeling becomes a firm conviction of the existence of somebody or something which is not only beyond human power, but which is everlasting or eternal. And when man rises to the conception that this eternal *satya* is also in himself, the only existing reality in the life of the individual, he ceases to fear and tremble, and religion becomes to him a source of hope and bliss.

THE GENESIS OF WESTERN CIVILISATION.

By KSHIRODCHANDRA SEN.

A civilisation is an ideological organism. Its organs are living ideas, and it is subject to growth, decay and death. It is maintained by the interdependence of the ideas which form its organs and work towards a definite end. Its health is determined by the vitality and strength of the ideas, its infirmity is marked by the weakness of one or more of them, and its decay by their diminishing interdependence.

Every living civilisation has a history, not merely of its life and activities, but of its origin and growth, and of its decline as well. This history forms its biography which is generally written after death. Western Civilisation is not yet dead, and the time for writing its biography has not yet arrived. I shall here try to give the history of its parentage, referring to its activities, if at all, only to test the correctness of that history.

A civilization comes into existence, or is born, like any other organism, *i.e.*, it implies one or more pre-existing organisms. But ideas are too subtle to enable us to determine whether a civilization has a sexual or an asexual origin; perhaps intellectuality may be regarded as the masculine, and morality as the feminine principle. Also a civilization, like a biological organism, grows by assimilation. The problem is thus complicated by the combination of philogenetic evolution and ontogenetic development.

The parentage of the psychology of western civilization is claimed for Christianity, for Greek culture, for Roman imperialism, and for biological Darwinism,—while the ethnical and physiographical psychology of the people, among whom it prevails, is all but completely forgotten. Man has a preference for exotics. Christianity, Greek culture, and Roman imperialism are foreign factors in the creation and development of Western Civilization, which is perhaps indebted to all these influences, acting directly or by repercussion; and the question appears to resolve itself into one of allocation.

The study is interesting, but unfortunately no systematic analytic effort appears to have been directed towards a solution of the problem; and as to synthetic endeavours, western researchers seem to be more hindered than helped by the intensity of their interests, by their predispositions and pre-occupations, which cloud the perspective. My justification in writing this short essay lies in the old saying that the spectator sometimes sees more of the game than the players.

As a creative factor Christianity has three distinct elements in it, *viz* : (1) the Old Testament (2) the Gospels and Apostolic teachings and (3) the resolutions of Œcumenical Councils and Papal bulls and edicts. To separate them is to take the bottom out of the religion. To believe in their unity is to do violence to logical consistency and the principles of science.

It appears marvellous that this religion stood erect for fifteen hundred years, and only gave way when foreign influences were somewhat accidentally brought to bear upon it by the crusades, which ended fatally for Christianity, not by their direct action in the field of battle, but by their indirect effect which scattered the vestigial elements of Greek culture all over Europe. These elements are supposed to form the foundation of what is known as the *Renaissance*, or new birth of Europe, that is to say, the birth of Western Civilization.

But though the influence of Greek culture as a formative factor is undeniable, yet to regard it as the sole or even chief creative influence would be erroneous. Greek culture had been already slowly percolating into western Europe through Mussalman scholars working in Islamic Universities in Spain. The expulsion of the Greeks from Constantinople scattered Greek scholars, like a previous event which had scattered the Jews, all over Europe. These scholars had not neglected to carry their scholarship with them, and the diffusive power of knowledge, asserting itself in the countries where Catholicism was dominating the intellectual outlook of the people, soon caused havoc in the sphere of existing ideas and ideals of life.

Old ideas were destroyed and replaced by older ideas resuscitated from their Greek sepulchres, to form the foundation of a new structure which has now developed into Western

Civilization. Destruction is the inevitable first stage of construction, though this may shock the conscience of comfortable people. The destruction of ideas is more potent than the destruction of brick and mortar, or the drowning of battleships, or the massacre of armies. To lay the foundation of Western Civilization it was necessary to destroy some foundational Christian ideas, and it was this essential work that Greek culture efficiently performed.

Greek culture has several aspects ranging from pure idolatry to the Transcendental Idealism of Plato. The element in Greek culture which has most influenced the psychology of western civilization is Protagorean Humanism,—the element which makes old Greece so admirable. It swept away much of the dust and dirt of other-worldliness with which the robust, Greek-like, Nordic mind was smothered by Christian teachings. The Teuton is a pragmatist by blood. The old Sylvan gods made very little permanent impression on his mind; and when the monks from Rome came to preach Christianity in the woods of Germany, they had the advantage of working in vacuity. The mind to be worked upon was fresh and there was very little in the shape of formulated ideas to be consciously destroyed.

The success of the monks, however, was superficial. Thousands were baptised in a single day of whom not one understood, or had the capacity to understand what baptism meant. Their ideas, if they had any, were unconscious or sub-conscious. They were pragmatic in their outlook on life, and continued to be so with a thin layer of the sandy silt of Christianity laid over their minds. This is the view taken by Herbert Spencer and, I think, it is not susceptible of being correctly contradicted.

Greek humanism, sucked in through the pipe of the *renaissance*, revived or rather re-inforced the old primitive pragmatism of the North, and clothed it with a new dignity and splendour. The joys of life and its hopes in this world, thereupon formed the main propulsive factor in human activity; and the achievements of the ancient Greeks, visualised by the study of Greek history and Greek literature, made these joys and hopes more alluring than the eschatological service of God in heaven

and its concomitant beatitude, taught by the monks and clergymen of the Roman Church.

Roman imperialism had no visible influence on the nascent people at large until the discoveries in the new world, geographical, geological, anthropological and sociological, and the possibility of exploitation on a Himalayan scale, laid before their robust hearts a new perspective of worldly joys and worldly hopes such as the richest and most imaginative among them had never experienced before. Roman imperialism meant the political domination and economical exploitation of the known world. The administrative adventures of Columbus and his immediate successors showed that a still more colossal empire was waiting for the nation which could make *might* create *right*.

It was the new world that helped to recreate the sentiment of imperialism in the old, which had nearly forgotten it. It was not confined to any particular region of western Europe, but spread over the smallest as well as the largest maritime nations. Spain, Portugal, France, England, Holland,—all felt the thrill of this sentiment vibrating through their national hearts. The cultivation of imperialistic ambition by several rival nations necessarily led to pugnacious Nationalism. The new imperialism thus created, experienced undreamt of vicissitudes during three centuries of colonization, conquest, revolt, resistance; and the forces generated by revolution and warfare with their sustained attitude of menace on the one hand and peaceful separatism, with its slow, discreet withdrawal on the other, are the original forces now dwindled and degenerated into mere nationalism.

The Imperialism of which we hear so much at the present time, is of a subtler type. It may be called commercial imperialism. Economic exploitation has taken a new turn, more intellectual but less moral and less dignified. It is divided, and divested of absolute monopoly, and so compelled to run zig-zag. The exploited nations themselves are becoming self-conscious, and their awareness is exposing the increasingly sneaky methods of the exploitation, which tries to maintain its dignity partly by inventing false excuses and apologies, and partly, Peter-like, by denying itself. The world is gradually approaching a stage in which exploitation will find it too hard to support itself and

in which therefore the conscious struggle for existence, as between man and man and between nation and nation, will cease by its own profitlessness; nay, by the discovery that it is detrimental to life and progress.

Darwinism, as a practical propulsive force in human life, is pragmatism traced backward to pure animalism, and pressed forward to the highest achievements of civilization. The struggle for existence—the gladiatorial life, with its association of blood, death and shocking suffering—which assumes a gloomy outlook in the visionary atmosphere of Christianity, possesses an unspeakable charm for the primitive pragmatic mentality, particularly of the Aryan race, which refuses to brood over, or even to look upon, the melancholy miseries of the vanquished and the rejected, and grows jubilant over the triumphs of the victorious and the selected. Admiration is lavished on the strong and contempt as a natural impulse is reserved for the weak. Charity to the latter in its highest form manifests itself, if at all, in the shape of oblivion. But for this contempt and forgetfulness, the struggle for existence would sooner or later come to be arrested by the inhibitive force of womanish weakness, and progress by natural selection would then come to an end.

Primitive pragmatism, the greatest gift of cosmic nature, lies at the bottom of Darwinism. The history of Europe is the history of a continuous struggle for existence, affecting the fortunes of individual classes and nations. Darwin was not required to travel across oceans in quest of facts in support of his theory. Indeed Herbert Spencer, who worked out the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest from man downwards, never resorted to the direct exploitation of foreign facts, and even his indirect exploitation through books and friendly reports was designed as an after-thought for purposes of reinforcement and verification only. The facts were scattered broad-cast before these philosophers, both in history and contemporary events. They had only to generalise from them.

Life in western Europe has never been, and is not now, a walk through a garden of fragrant flowers, and with the progress of its civilization the struggle for existence was bound to increase. The struggle for existence being the developing force in this

civilization, there must be a direct correlation between the variations of the civilization and those of the struggle. Optimism therefore suggests the necessity of an increasing intensity in the struggle for existence. And Benjamin Kidd is one of these optimists in whose opinion it will be an evil day for western civilization if this struggle slackens or slows down to a lower pitch of vehemence and fury.

Western people practised Darwinism for many centuries without knowing it. Darwin, like the grammarian, only made Europe conscious of what she was doing. Of course the common people have no knowledge of Darwin's theory, any more than they possess a knowledge of Christianity. Darwinism, so far as it concerns man, is merely a perspicuous statement of the pragmatic life of Europe, which existed before Christianity was preached to the people by the Roman monks, and which continued to thrive in spite of all their teachings, and still continues to flourish, adorned and enriched by a wealth of poetry and elegant literature.

To convert non-moral natural selection into moral divine selection in the struggle for self-aggrandisement, miscalled the struggle for existence, is to invest Darwinism, as applied to human life, with the glory and beauty of advanced pragmatism such as inspired Greek life in the age of Pericles. The morbid melancholy which entwines itself round the defeated and the rejected had no place in this philosophy of life. Defeat and misery were quickly drowned in a veritable Pacific Ocean of forgetfulness, while victories and survivals were celebrated in spectacular processions and splendid pageants for the benefit of the masses to prevent their mentality from being buried in an abysmal pessimism.

In this philosophy man never gets old. He is a grown up child all his life. The world is his play ground, where he pleasantly sweats to recreate his appetite, which is liable to fluctuation. He is always active and his occasional contemplative mood is designed to reinforce his gladiatorial energy. Life is a game to him. He does not give himself much opportunity to think of death as a possible event in human existence. When death does come, he faces it manfully as if Yama were his

competitor in a gladiatorial game. His very gods help him. They never carry his imagination into eschatological heights, or hurl it into fundamental depths, to bring about any aberration in his habitual joyful enthusiasm.

The Greek humanist perpetually lived in the *seen*; and no one was a genuine Greek who was also not a sincere humanist. He loved power, beauty and wealth. Western civilization also loves these things, but the order of precedence is altered to wealth, power and beauty. The difference is great, and may eventually lead to results which will render it impossible to trace the one psychology from the other. It is this Greek humanism which has influenced European life from the sixteenth century onwards. It is this humanism which has received the sanction of science from the Darwinian philosophy of the survival of the fittest, and has ceased to be dismayed either by the gloomy prognostications, or by the airy aspirations, of the posthumous aspect of Christianity, which, never bright at any period of history, was cast into the penumbra by the *renaissance*, and has now been all but completely put out of sight by the refractive implications of the theory of evolution.

Among foreign factors, Jewish blood is as much traceable among the population of Europe to-day, as the Whiteman's blood is traceable in the Negro population of the United States. The Jew, as pure Jew, has all but ceased to exist in Europe. He has nominally become a convert to Christianity, but in reality he has converted the Christian into a Jew. The German Jew is perhaps the most influential man in Commercial and Industrial Europe, and his example is being followed by the Jew of other countries, of whom the Russian Jew is the most conspicuous at the present moment. The British Jew has captured the heart of England by peaceful penetration. And entire Europe now listens to the instruction of the Jew with greater reverence than the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount ever received from her. The living Jew has eclipsed the crucified Jew. He has, by the camouflage of faith in Christianity, and by means of mercantile and sexual amity, surreptitiously penetrated and leavened the very blood and marrow of the western world, and now commands it as an invisible but verifiable presence.

The mass of the Christian peoples, for a thousand years and more, never had the opportunity of knowing the inwardness of the religion they professed; what they learnt and practised was a mixture as far removed from the genuine article as self-assertion is from self-renunciation. Christianity is said to be the religion of a Book, and that book was an unknown quantity among its followers. The Bible was never taught. Besides, the sixty books which pass under the name of the Holy Bible contain divergent ideas which challenge mutual reconciliation and only keep themselves together by the tightened screws of unreasoned faith. This faith began to be shaken as soon as attention was called to the aspiring narrowness of the ancient Hebrew mind, which temerously stretched out its arms of imagination to reach the ends of heaven and earth without proper spiritual equipment.

It has continued to be shaken with increasing violence by later discoveries, until now nothing of it remains except the hollow apologetics of interested persons and the dubious compliments of rationalists indulging in the historic method. Of the three parts into which I divided the creed of Christianity, the Old Testament has fallen by the power of science, specially astronomy, geology and biology; Papal edicts and bulls have fallen by the power of Greek humanism, which hates tyranny and craves for freedom; while the Gospel never made any deep impression on the pragmatic mind of Europe, which identifies both truth and morality with utility,—an identification, at first unconscious, which gradually became conscious and is now fortified by outworks of logic and worldly experience.

Caxton made it possible for Europe to read the Bible and to know that her actual religion was not the religion of a book, but of excrescences that had grown upon it. The book, when translated and printed, taught her to repudiate the religion in vogue, and the renaissance taught her to repudiate the book. Science has confirmed her in both the repudiations. So that the religion of Europe is now a destructive lack of faith, and not of creative belief. The philosophy of Europe is also a series of repudiations and destructive criticisms which far outweigh the tiny constructive efforts of its solitary, segregated researchers.

Finally, the general moral and spiritual atmosphere has been gradually disinfected so as to be purged of all vestiges of the bacilli of the Sermon on the Mount and the Kingdom of God.

Let it not be supposed that I in any measure disparage Christism. I only mean to convey the idea that Western Civilization has been destructive of Christism proper, and conversely, if Europe had really cultivated Christism, instead of muscular and military Christianity, western civilization would have experienced almost insurmountable difficulties at its very start, across the Atlantic, where it laid the foundation of its characteristic gigantic industrial life and productive achievement by a moral process which would have been shocking to Christ,—a process of depopulation which assumed the ethics of rat extermination in a plague-infected town.

It will thus be seen that of the several formative principles of Western Civilization the primitive pragmatism of the Nordic people is the earliest and the most potent. It is also indigenous, and therefore stands in the same relation to western civilization as, according to Hebrew legend, Adam stands to the present generation of men. Greek culture, or to be more exact, Greek humanism only reinforced and polished it, sand-papering all stains of Christianity out of it.

The moral influence of science, sub-consciously suggested or insinuated by Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, is only a restatement of this original pragmatism. It emphasises the power of the cosmic process in human life, and firmly enthrones the 'ape and tiger' quality in the heart of man, not as a sneaky influence ashamed to avow itself openly, but as a force, inherent in the nature of man, and of stupendous advantage to him in his relations with his weaker neighbours,—as a force which adds strength and beauty, truth and dignity to the joys of the life *defacto*, by casting into the shade the life of the immortal soul, which, by mysterious divine ordinance, poiselessly trembles on the horns of the dilemma of earthly joys and the sorrows of perdition on the one hand, and of worldly sufferings and the beatitude of heaven on the other.

A soulless life in a sea of Christianity, deep or shallow, had its dangers. Huxley perceived this, and found a safe steering

rudder in Agnosticism, which successfully prevented Christian indignation from rising to incandescent redness, and at the same time mellowed the growing Hæckelian heart of material monism by an ingenious compromise, which made truth and belief invertebrate. His success was partly due to the increasing infirmity of Christianity, which had saved its longevity, but not its prestige and dignity, by tolerating what it had no adequate power to persecute.

Since Huxley's time, western philosophy, nursed and reared in a Darwinian atmosphere, has gradually lifted its voice from a mere whisper to a strident treble in favour of the realities of life,—as the man in the street sees them. The latest development of this phase of philosophy is the formulation of the creed of Pragmatism, which, while posing as a mere philosophic method, in reality exercises the influence of a definite cult upon the human mind.

Jacobin Pragmatism denies any final ideal as the goal of progress, but adds to the ordinary moral rules, qualifications suggested by expediency or immediate utility. The doctrine is no doubt obscured by professions of regard for ultimate benefit and whole benefit, as well as immediate benefit, but no impartial mind is likely to be misled by these professions, when the fundamental principles of the creed reject the idea of cessation of change and progress. Jacobinism, which is easily intelligible to the common intellect, is a restatement of the primitive pragmatism or paganism of the early centuries of Europe, with embellishments gathered from logic and culture, and is likely to reign supreme until some unforeseen catastrophe sweeps it away.

As to the future, it may be asserted that what has been conquered by the sword can only be maintained by the sword; and if the western people begin to study the Sermon on the Mount in earnest, they are bound to lose their ascendancy, their applied science, their power of exploitation and the grandeur of their social life. The result may be a new civilization of a higher moral and spiritual order, but it will essentially be different from Western Civilization as we know it.

MIHINTALE.

The Ancient Home of the Buddhist Priesthood of Ceylon.

By F. G. PEARCE.

Anuradhapura, the ruined ancient Capital of Ceylon, is a city of sad memories. The hand of the destroyer fell heavily upon it, not once but many times, till all the life was crushed out of that fair form, and nought remained for its inhabitants but to weep among the ruins and to die, or to flee whither, for a time at least, the dreaded Tamil could not come.

Surely the memories of those days of agony and of lamentation linger yet among the ancient stones, covered though they are now by the prolific hand of Nature,—a hand in the tropics scarcely less destructive to Man's works than that of the invader. For, Anuradhapura's great *dagobas*, vast solid domes of masonry, some more than three hundred feet high and as much in diameter, are now scarce distinguishable from natural hills, densely covered as they are, not by mere weeds, but by forest trees, creepers and jungle.

And her palaces—those fair halls over whose polished floors moved heroic kings and noble women, and where was heard the joyous prattle of children and the laughter of courtiers? Utterly gone! Not even a wall, or an archway, to show where they stood, as in the ruins of Rome and Persepolis and Babylon the Great. Nothing,—save here and there a cluster of bare granite pillars, a few still upright, though at all angles, among many more lying prone, and the whole buried often under many feet of soil and debris, the heaped-up rubbish of Man and Nature. *Ichabod* indeed! Never could the phrase be more appropriately applied than to Anuradhapura. For Jerusalem remains, some of its ruins at least repaired and utilised; but Anuradhapura is no more,—its glory forever departed with its kings.

Anuradhapura, therefore, is a city of sad memories. Sorrow haunts it. Not so Mihintale, only eight miles distant. For Mihintale has ever been the city of the *Sangha*, the Buddhist order of Monks, whose first principles are *Aniccha*, *Dukha*, *Anatta* (Impermanence, Sorrow, Selflessness), and that *Sangha* still occupies it, unmoved by the impermanence of men and matter.

Not that Mihintale has escaped destruction. It has shared precisely the same fate as its royal neighbour. Its great *dagobas* are clothed with dense jungle; the stones of its halls and shrines strew the earth. Yet peace remains,—not a melancholy, but a mellow Peace. Here men achieved, one feels, and the record of their achievement persists, not in the perishable evidence of brick and stone, but absorbed into the very atmosphere, and in the hearts of the people even unto a century of generations after.

Save at festival times, full moon days, especially Vaisakh, the Full-Moon of May, when Gautama Buddha was born, few come to Mihintale. The Brethren of the Yellow Robe still occupy the ancient rock-cells and a few modern hermitage buildings on the summit. For the rest, the place is undisturbed, save by the bear, the leopard, and the elephant, innumerable birds and monkeys, and the ubiquitous lizards, grasshoppers and their kind.

Mihintale is not on the level, as Anuradhapura is, but is one of the largest of the few isolated rocky eminences in the neighbourhood. Its principal peak is about one thousand feet high, and the whole area must be several square miles in extent. The entire mountain from foot to summit was donated to the Buddhist *Sangha* by King Devanampiya Tissa, of Lanka, about 300 B.C., when, upon this very spot, he was converted to Buddhism by Mahinda, the priestly son of Asoka the great. Generation after generation added to the splendid buildings which soon adorned the site, till the whole mountain-side was laid out with gardens and groves amid which were *dagobas*, *viharas*, dwelling-places for the monks, *pansalas* for the brotherhood, and cells for the solitary.

No more lovely and appropriate spot could have been selected for an *ārāma*. Even amid its ruins its surpassing beauty appears. One who wanders, as I did, away from the principal ascent, will at every turn find himself in fair secluded spots, where the ruined foundations of pillars, of doorways and flights of steps, of shrines and of cells, peep through among the grasses and flowers, offering cool harbourage and a tranquil retreat. Ancient trees embower the sites of these well-planned, beautifully arranged hermitages, between whose spreading branches the sunlight streams, flooding the greensward beneath with golden light, and making the deep shadows seem cooler by contrast.

Seat yourself in one of these groves, near such an *ārāma*, in the shadow of a great tree, whose roots will form a good resting-place. No sadness is among *these* ruins. The grey stones, now dislodged from their true alignment, speak not of past failures, but of past accomplishments. The men who lived here *achieved*. They trod a path leading to Peace, if ever men did. Their bodies perished,—mayhap in later years many died by violence even, when Anuradhapura went up in flames,—but their hearts and minds were established in the things eternal.

And those last days! What courage! What resignation! What steadfastness! From Mihintale's slopes the countryside all around is visible. Think how, from that high vantage-point, the monks must have watched the Tamil storm approaching. Night after night, nearer come the flares of distant villages going up in destroying flames. Day after day the rumours arrive, thick and fast and terrible. And then, one day the war-drums are heard on the wind. Nearer they approach. Nearer to the Royal City, so ancient so renowned, so beautiful. The monks are chanting *pirith** night and day.

Then, in reply, the drums and conches of the Sinhalese army of defence. Amid hopes and fears the king marches out to meet the invader. From Mihintale the dust is seen, the dread

*Buddhist *mantras* (words of power) for obtaining the blessing of the *Devas*.

sounds of battle are heard,—harbingers of the destruction soon to come even to that place of peace. Then the messengers arrive : messengers with evil tidings.

Alas for Anuradhapura ! As the monks see the dust and smoke rising above its shining roofs and domes, are there not many who, in spite of all their philosophy and their discipline, cover their faces with their hands and weep ? Are there not many, even among the older ones, who in the silence of their cells shed bitter tears ? And if not by day, when night falls, then indeed may human hearts be forgiven if they can endure no more. For from Mihintale the full terrors of the scene is visible, the city all in flames. The sacred shrines destroyed. The people massacred !

Last scene but one—the flood of refugees, for not many stay at Mihintale. They know full well that the Tamils will have no more respect for the holy places at Mihintale or for its yellow robes, than they showed in the Capital city, where the Buddhist Temples were the first objects of their rage. Ah ! the stream that passes along the road to the east. Mothers and little children, old men and women, falling by the roadside, fainting, dying. And grown men weeping,—hopeless, helpless.

So far as they can, the kind-hearted monks tend. But not for long. When day dawns the Tamil drums are heard,—nearer and nearer. The turn of Mihintale has come.

Let us draw a veil over the end. Peace be to the slayers as to the slain,—for in truth the dwellers in that holy place died with no curses on their lips. They knew better. Their long discipline of mind and heart and body had not failed them. Not in vain had they been followers of the Blessed One.

Wherefore, there is no wrath, no misery, amid the groves and glades of ruined Mihintale. It is still a place of Peace and Joy. May it ever remain so, for the healing of sore hearts and world-weary minds.

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa.

THE SKELETON.

(Translated by the Author).

A beast's bony frame lies bleaching on the grass.

Its dry white bones—Time's hard laughter—

cry to me :

Thy end, proud man, is one with the end of the cattle

that graze no more,

for when thy life's wine is spilt to its last drop

the cup is flung away in a final unconcern.

I cry in answer :

Mine is not merely the life that pays its bed and board

with its bankrupt bones, and is made destitute.

Never can my mortal days contain to the full

all that I have thought and felt, gained and given,

listened to and uttered.

Often has my mind crossed Time's border,—
is it to stop at last for ever at the boundary
of crumbling bones?
Flesh and blood can never be the measure of the truth
that is myself ;
the days and moments cannot wear it out
with their passing kicks ;
the way-side bandit, Dust, dares not rob it of all its possessions.

Know that I have drunk the ~~money~~ of the formless
from the lotus of endless forms ;
through the cave of sufferings I have found
the secret path of delight ;
and have seen tracks of light across the voiceless desert of the dark.
Death, I refuse to accept from thee
that I am nothing but a gigantic jest of God,
that I am annihilation built with all the wealth of the Infinite.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

THE JOINT FAMILY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

By PROF. K. M. PANIKKAR.

The political activity of a nation, except in revolutionary times, concerns itself with the outward forms of life, and in this sense the political idea is never absent from the masses. But it is otherwise when questions which effect the basic structure of society is concerned. The principles of social life, the philosophy of national civilisations, the ideas that are at the base of external institutions, are all left untouched both by the mass mind as well as by the political mind in ordinary times. When a civilisation changes its character, the social institutions which form the tangible expression of the replaced systems must be already undermined by a process of revolutionary thought in which the leadership belongs not to the soldiers and the statesman but to the *littérateurs* and the philosophers.

The French revolution provides us with one of the best examples. It differed from other sudden political changes in that it reconstructed society according to a new set of principles, and changed the very character of the civilisation of Western Europe. But this was done after the *Encyclopædists* and other leaders of French Illumination, from Voltaire to Condorcet, had achieved a revolution in social thought, ousting accepted philosophies from their seats of honour, undermining even those with which the existence of society itself was intertwined. There was not an institution of the *ancien régime* from the Monarchy and the Church to the methods of education, which these daring souls did not attack and destroy. This intellectual preparation gave to the French uprising the character of a re-birth of democracy, of the creation of a new civilisation, which the merely political revolution of England and America did not possess.

The same is the case with the Russian revolution. Unlike the German revolution, it is more than a change in the form of Government. It is the application of a new social idea, as in the case of the French revolution, though in a different way,—an attempt to create a new civilisation. The social principles of

this experiment gained supremacy over the intellectual world of Europe long before their political manifestation.

Marx and Engels had already proved that capitalist society had neither the support of morality, nor even of the ordinary principles of utilitarianism; that property as therein constituted was nothing but theft, so that the workers of the world had all the world to gain, and nothing to lose but their chains. Marx's statement that "Property is theft" was as much the dynamic gospel of the new society, as Rousseau's ringing cry that "Every man is born free, but is everywhere in chains" was of the French revolution. Thus the social idea, without which political changes are merely surface ripples, can come only from individuals,—neither from the masses, nor the classes. The political idea is only the most widespread and universal force which can get easy hold of the mass-mind, and great changes in history happen when a revolutionary social idea gets transformed into a working political principle.

We talk of the Indian people and of Indian civilisation because the Indian mind, as expressed by its institutions, is essentially the same. In spite of differences in race and religion India is one, because its externalised soul, from whatever angle we may look at it, is the same. The food of the people all over India is of the same type. The same kind of cities and villages, the same kind of social customs, the same system of joint family, extend all over India. Look at the methods of ploughing and watering fields, of threshing corn,—they are virtually the same wherever you may go. Likewise, the social idea behind the type of civilisation, as expressed in its institutions, that we meet with in India, is the same.

That the present social organisation is wasteful and inefficient in results, reactionary and obscurantist in the light of modern developments, and so stands in the way of our right political progress, will be granted by most people. The necessity for social reform is recognised, but it is still to be *reform* and not *revolution*, still to be concerned with details and not with fundamentals. In social types, as in other forms of human activity, the externals matter little. What is of importance is the central idea on which the activity is to be based.

The tinkering little reforms that are advocated by our social reformers are only so many attempts to polish up the exterior of our social body. What is necessary, if we want to create a new India and to build up a new civilisation, is to change the social mind itself.

The central institution around which the whole of Indian life is built up is the joint family. It seems to have existed in India all through history. In the time of the Buddha, as in time of Sankara, it was the unit of the Hindu nation. It has existed through the many centuries of Indian civilisation in almost the same state as we find to-day. But whatever the benefits it might have brought, it has been without doubt the most powerful force against the development of a strong social feeling in India.

We shall endeavour to show how this Joint Family system has been the root cause of our physical degeneration, of the darkness in which our masses are buried, of the enthronement of authority in every detail of our life, and of the desparate fatalism that has become almost a national philisophy for us. Without a complete reconstruction of this family system, no alteration in our national character large enough to enable us to give life to the decadent social institutions which at the present time constitute a dead-weight on the national soul now seeking to reassert itself, would be possible at all.

The true principle of social evolution is the highest possible freedom for the individual, both in his self-development as well as in his sphere of service to Society. The main function of the state in this view is the creation of conditions which will afford to every member the largest scope for the development of his individuality. There is no other justification for an organised society or community. If it is granted that freedom of the individual to develop and express himself is the purpose for which the state exists, and its one and sole function, then no social structure which is not conducive to this main purpose could be helpful in its realisation.

That is why the joint family is the greatest hindrance in the way of Indian political evolution, because it is a force against the freedom of the individual. The main characteristic of the joint family is its patriarchal nature, the authority of the father

over the children. The individual disappears in a group, which purports to exist, as does the autocratic sovereign, for his good,—but not for the purpose of developing him as a free citizen. The civic virtues, and the principles of service to society, are as nothing to filial virtues in the family code, so that no chance is given to the individual to rise to his full height. In this way the joint family certainly stands in the way of social progress.

In olden times, when the ideal of society as a purposive organisation, as a large family embracing all members in a well defined geographical unity, was absent, the family was perhaps the largest group which could give the individual the opportunities for shelter, co-operation, and service that he required. Even Aristotle, who believes in the logical priority of the state to all human institutions, accepts the chronological priority of the family, and in fact derives the state from it. Probably the historical conditions in India helped to strengthen the family against the state, which never became identified with the whole community. If a vigorous political tradition identifying the whole Indian people with the state had developed, the family system might have weakened. However, be the historical explanation what it may, it is undeniable that the joint family has been and is opposed to the growth of the right social idea.

It stands in the state, as a group within a group, generating its own loyalties, raising barriers within the community, and forming an intermediary between the state and the individual. Though the relation in which the family thus stands to the community is much the same as that of the trade union to the state, there is one fundamental difference.

The trade unions, and other groups of that kind within the state, are voluntary organisations, whose claim to the loyalty of the individual is based on material considerations. The choice is easy enough between the trade union and the state. Not even the most ardent Labourite would claim a priority of allegiance for the particular organisation or party of which he is a member. The whole life of a man is not identified with such associations, as it is with the family or the state. Hence though the trade unions, employers' associations, and such other bodies form states within the state, and divide in a sense the loyalty of the

individual, their hold on the members can never be strong enough to form a serious hindrance to social unity or to political progress.

But not so with the joint family. Its claims on the individual are all-embracing; the loyalty which it demands does not admit of any rival, and therefore its relation with the individual is as exclusive as that of the state itself. That loyalty to the family has been a serious rival to the loyalty to the state, is proved by history. Further, in India, owing to peculiar circumstances, the joint family system has been anti-social in another way. By marriages, alliances, and relationships each group of families has tended to form sub-castes dividing the community further and further, and narrowing down at every step the circle of social interest; with the result that the Hindu community has become almost a sociological fiction.

Instead of the widening process, which is essentially the process of civilisation, we had in India this extraordinary tendency of each family, with its relations, to form narrower and narrower groups, in great contrast to the general process all over the world of the expansion of communities,—of loyalty to the tribe giving place to loyalty to larger and larger groups, and finally to the nation. In India the opposite has been the case. The greatest loyalty is to the smallest of all groups,—the family,—which calls for the greatest sacrifices.

Besides, even from the point of view of the individual, the family stands in the way of the fullest development. It has been remarked that in India no man enjoys his individual family life as that is known in the other countries. An individual is not a unit, he is a part. He lives along with others. Novels depicting modern Indian life express all through this single idea: the conflict of the individual family with the joint family. The novels of Tagore, and even his own reminiscences, demonstrate how deep-rooted is this revolt against the group-family in the individual's mind.

All over India this is the same. In Madras, in Bengal, in the U. P., everywhere among Hindus, and to a large extent among Muslims, the group-family stands in the way of the individual family and is the cause of our stunted social growth

and the slovenly habits of crowd-life that characterise our home-surroundings. It has often been noticed how after a futile protest, individuals, who happen to have been brought up under better conditions, eventually surrender to the tradition of the family, even the most cultured and the highest developed mind being dragged down to the level of its lowest member.

Another important effect of this system is on the position of women. To the newcomer by marriage the mother-in-law is the proverbial tyrant. The picture of the young bride brought into a strange family, where even the sympathy and love of her husband are almost inaccessible to her across the artificial wall of the female group, has often been drawn. It has a deadening effect on the sensibility of our womanhood. No amount of college education can improve the lot of our women, unless the family is reconstructed and each woman becomes the mistress of her own home, shouldering the responsibility of bringing up her children and providing for them the right mental and moral atmosphere. A refined home is no luxury, it is a necessity; and in the mix-up of the joint family system it is impossible even for the most sturdy spirits to build up the home they want.

Then again, the system of marriage without any natural selective process, which the joint family necessitates, is the cause of the racial degeneration in India. The abnormal percentage of infant mortality, and the absolute impossibility of popularising sanitary ideas are due to the same system. The physical conditions of the life of the young mother in the joint family are such that without its reconstruction there can be no chance of India rearing up a race of able-bodied, sturdy men and women, who can maintain their own position in the world. When children are huddled together, and individual attention to their up-bringing is not available, the race naturally degenerates physically.

More than this, there is the psychological effect of the joint family to which sufficient attention has not been attracted. It is to this system that we must trace the ingrained feeling in the Hindu mind that authority whether it be in state, religion, or social custom, is in itself sacred. What is established is to be obeyed. The liberation of the critical faculty, which throws

every institution, every ideal and every dogma into the crucible of thought, and which is so necessary for a progressive people, is impossible in a society in which its primary unit, the family itself, is an embodiment of the principal of authority. The pernicious effect of this on our national growth need not be elaborated.

From all these considerations it would seem that what is most required is to free the individual from the manacles of the joint family system. The purpose of every society is to move forward through the exertion of its own powers and to develop for itself institutions which will permit the greatest development of its constituent members. For this, obviously the most necessary step is to free the individual from the bonds of customs and institutions which necessarily weigh him down and impede such growth.

We have seen that from every point of view, physically, psychologically and socially, what does the greatest harm to Indian people now is the persistence of their primitive organisation of the family. Reconstruction of this system in a way which would afford the individual the greatest possible liberty, with a view to remove a middle-organisation between him and Society, so as to give him greater chances for serving the latter, and finding therein the best and highest form of life, seems to be what is now required.

Social progress, as d'Holbach pointed out, involves continuous mental effort in examining and diagnosing the diseases of society, and of equally continuous activity in experiment and replacement. In India the time has come when, unless social thinking revolutionises ideas and transforms institutions, the common life Society cannot advance. To my mind the first stage towards that must come through the reconstruction of the family which alone will give the individual the necessary freedom of mind, relieved from the leaden weight of inherited custom, to think and act purposively for the benefit of Society as a whole.

THE BODY OF HUMANITY

By C. F. ANDREWS.

The Function of Islam.

It has always appeared to me a comparatively simple matter to relate organically together, in one family history and genealogy, the two great movements in the sphere of universal religion which sprang from India and Palestine,—the Hindu-Buddhist and the Christian,—because they have as their background the one common principle of Ahimsa. They start from the old theory of retaliation only to reject it. They enunciate the new principle of overcoming evil by the perfect submission and sacrifice of love.

But it is not so easy to discover the exact relation within the Body of Humanity which is held by Islam. That strange meteoric phenomenon in human history came forth sudden and blazing like a portent from the Arabian Desert. It still bears the mark of the desert upon it. One of its most vital functions, as an organised religion, is to send back each believer at least once in his life on a pilgrimage to the desert, there to feel the awe of the divine worship and the divine unity. Throughout one month in each year, the month of Ramazan, each faithful Muslim has not only to abstain from all food from sunrise to sunset, but even from a single drop of water. This law is to be observed, even in the tropics, when the lunar month of Ramazan falls in the burning heat of June, and it is faithfully and widely kept. I have seen in Africa the heroic suffering undergone in its observance.

The unique and intense ardour which burnt within this new religion, till it held sway in a few years from the borders of India to the Atlantic Ocean, has never been adequately explained. For many centuries Christian prejudice and fanatical superstition in the West were too strong for any impartial verdict to be given. In modern times, also, political considerations have entered in

and these have once more obscured any clear understanding. Such recent books as Lothrop Stoddard's, 'New World of Islam,' or M. Andrée Service's 'Psychology of Islam', are politically biassed. Yet no impartial observer can fail to be impressed by the supreme part which Islam has played over large areas of the world's surface and at critical times in the world's history.

For it has to be remembered that Islam is a living power to-day among many races of mankind, which neither Buddhism nor Christianity had been able to reach in their greatest periods of expansion. It has also appealed in modern times by its very simplicity and directness to master men of action in Europe, America and Asia. Above all, it has impressed men by its virility as a great and noble creed. I have read how General Gordon, who was himself a fervent Christian, maintained more and more as he grew older an attitude of reverence for the deep religious fervour and sincerity which he found in Islam. Very many others, who have lived and associated with Musalmans, have felt the same appeal.

During my first years in India, when I was at Delhi, my own heart at first was drawn towards Islamic ideals more than towards the Hindu outlook upon life, both on account of what I saw with my own eyes and also the intimate friendships with Muslims that I made. At that time, indeed, I became thoroughly absorbed in Islam; its history and culture fascinated me, and I read and studied all I could about it. If, since then, the pendulum has swung some degrees the other way, nevertheless that first reverence for Islam has fundamentally remained unshaken and those earliest impressions of its dignity and greatness have never since been blurred. In all that I put down in this article, I write with those memories still vivid; and no criticism that I have to make will be other than that of an ardent friend whose love is manifest and apparent.

Whatever view we take, by no means can Islam be considered by anyone who carefully reviews the facts as a spent force in the history of mankind. Its strongest opponents give it the honour of never treating it as such. Dr. S. M. Zwemer, for instance, has declared, times without number, that from the point of view of population Islam is spreading in Africa far more

rapidly than any other religion. It is not rationally possible, therefore, if the theory of an organic unity of religion is held, to account for this persistent vitality in Islam except on the assumption that it has some necessary function to perform in the Body of Humanity, which could not be effected in any other way. What is that function? How can we best explain its rational existence?

I do not think that we can point to any new law of the spiritual life that Islam has discovered for the first time in human history. Behind both Christianity and Hindu-Buddhism, as I have said, there was actually such a discovery. For in both, supreme emphasis was laid upon the principle of Ahimsa as the essence of all true religion. I cannot see this side of religious truth emphasised in Islam. The Quran, as I read it, does not carry the solution of this great problem of non-retaliation any further forward. Rather, the opposite principle of retaliatory justice appears to gain a fresh approval and conviction.

I know that we have the remarkable instance of the Prophet's forbearance and magnanimity, when Mecca was entered in triumph after weary years of struggle. But there were clearly political gains of the very highest order to be obtained by such a magnanimous act; and deeds of dire punishment are equally apparent as a part of the Prophet's conduct along with such acts of sublime forgiveness. "I *believe* in retaliation," was the final word to me in an argument, which I had with one of the noblest Musalmans I have ever known; and another said to me, with an emphasis which I can never forget, "My religion *commands* me to take up the sword on certain occasions."

I have often wondered, therefore, whether there might be some practical defect in the Ahimsa doctrine itself, when pressed to its logical conclusion. The strong personality of Mahatma Gandhi,—in spite of the lengths to which he would go in carrying out to the full this doctrine of Ahimsa,—has always given him a natural leaning towards Islam. This represents an instinct, which goes deep into his inner life. Sometimes, I have thought that he had found in Islam a corrective to a weak-

ness that he subconsciously felt in the logic of Ahimsa, during its present stage of imperfect human representation.

As a pacifist myself, I know full well, how those in Europe, who as conscientious objectors have been carrying out in practice to the full the pacifist doctrine, have experienced the same inherent weakness in their own position, when they have pathetically tried to face the hard facts of human life as a whole, without surrendering their creed. Is the phenomenon of the sudden rise of Islam in part at least due to the fact, that a counterbalancing weight was needed, in face of the extreme Ahimsa position,—or at least a restatement of its postulates in terms less abstract and logical, and more in touch with human life?

Many years ago, at a very early stage in the great European War, my own mind, as a convinced conscientious objector, was very greatly troubled by an acute inner problem. I had no doubt at all concerning my own personal attitude towards War; it would never be conceivably possible for me to shoot down my fellow man. But what was to be my attitude towards others? Should I condemn outright those who were taking part in the War? In my perplexity, I wrote to the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and he answered me as follows :

In most matters of vital importance I have one thing to guide my thoughts, and it is this, that the figure which represents creation is not 'one' but 'two'. In the harmony of two contradictory forces everything rests. Whenever our logic endeavours to simplify things by reducing the troublesome 'two' into 'one' it goes wrong.

Some philosophies say that motion is all *maya* and truth is static. Others are of opinion that truth is fluid, and that it is only *maya* which represents it to us as static. But truth is beyond logic: it is the everlasting miracle: it is static and dynamic at the same time: it is ideal and real; finite and infinite.

The principle of war and the principle of peace both together make truth. They are contradictory: they seem to hurt each other, like the finger and the strings of a musical instrument. But this very contradiction produces music. When only one predominates, then there is the sterility of silence.

Our human problem is not whether we should only have war or peace, but how to harmonise them perfectly. So long as there is such a thing as force, we cannot say that we must not use force, but that we must not abuse it by making it the sole standard, and thus ignoring love. When love and force do not go together, then love is mere weakness and force is brutal. Peace becomes death when it is alone; war becomes a Demon when it kills its mate.

Of course, we must not think that killing one another is the only form of war. Man is pre-eminently a moral being: his war instinct should be shifted to the moral plane and his weapons should be moral weapons. The Hindu inhabitants of Bali, while giving up their lives before the invaders, fought with their moral weapons against physical power. A day will come when men's history will admit their victory. It was a war. Nevertheless it was in harmony with peace, and therefore glorious.

The allusion in the poet's letter to the action of the inhabitants of Bali needs some explanation. The Hindus of Bali, when forcibly invaded by the Dutch, dressed themselves in the white robes of sacrifice and offered themselves to be shot down, till the Dutch refrained from shooting. The Queen of Holland declared that such noble and brave people deserved their independence and refused to bring them any further into subjection. The Poet heard of the incident from an American painter who had recently visited the island. He had often discussed it with me as an ideal use of 'force' on the part of the Hindu inhabitants.

This letter of the Poet has often come back to my mind when pondering over the Hindu Muslim difficulty in India, and the parallel pacifist dilemma in Europe. Human life itself, as the poet shows, is a series of contradictions; and the very fact that there has seemed no immediate solution to the Hindu problem in India and the pacifist problem in Europe, has itself made me more and more wistfully anxious to know whether it is only,—to quote Hamlet's words,—

Between the fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites,

that human progress can be made at all in the highest matters.

It may be true that there is a primitive crudity in the Semitic mind, which has produced certain features of the Islamic faith. But may there not also be an over-subtlety in the Indian mind and a reliance upon abstract philosophic truth alone? Would the balance in human thought and practice have been struck without the compensation of Islam?

In all that I have written above, I have been giving expression to the doubts and questionings of my own mind; for I wish frankly to confess that I have no final solution to offer. A further consideration of great importance may be found from a review of the historical scene. The subject is a vast one, and it can only be outlined in this essay; but it seems to me to possess a vital historical value of the first order, if the theory I put forward is true.

When we regard human existence as a whole, we find that in those things of the spirit, which help forward the progress of mankind, life always makes its advances out of the primitive background by rhythmical tides, like the incoming currents of the sea. Only with difficulty, it gains and establishes each new advance,—here a little and there a little. As we watch the whole progress, we see often what appears for the time being a reversal in the tide of human life. But just when the set-back comes, there arises a new pressure from the vast deep, which urges the waters at some other point even beyond the old position. Each of these new pulsations seems to start from some far-away region in the rear; but each in turn carries forward some laggard portion of the human race.

Such surging upward, from the subconscious element in humanity into the conscious,—carrying the stream of the religious life forward, just when it was beginning to ebb,—seems to me to be a picture of the miracle of Islam in one of its deepest relations to human progress. It had just that creative element in it, that *élan vital* which humanity then needed. It reintegrated mankind.

Resemblances may be found in other epochs of human history. Christianity, starting from an out of the way corner of the Roman Empire, among fishermen and slaves and the despised race of Galilean Jews, must certainly have seemed,

at the time of its appearance, an altogether retrograde culture of the human race. Scholars and statesmen, like Tacitus and Pliny, regarded Christianity as a dangerous invasion of barbarism from within, similar to that which threatened the Empire from without. All the later classical writers unite in giving this description of it. Yet, in the end, (to continue a convenient metaphor) we can observe, how the silt, which it brought forward on its flood-tide, as it swept from East to West, fertilised Europe and carried with it new potencies of life. Islam bears, to me, something of this character in a later age, as representing a new life-giving current to mankind.

We can review the same process afresh, using another illustration. In Biology, we learn that there is always needed a continuous renewal of the human body, which goes on simultaneously with the elimination of waste tissue. Only in this way, can vitality be preserved; for the accumulation of waste matter clogs life itself and leads inevitably to decay and death. Even so, with the Body of Humanity, the deadness of each older civilisation needs to be sloughed off, like a skin outworn, if fresh life is to force its way up to the surface. And History reveals that there is no greater purifying and eliminating factor in human affairs than the uprush of a new religious impulse shaking the inner lives of masses of mankind.

Here, then, we have one potent reason for the startling rise of the religion of Islam from the heart of the Arabian Desert. For the Byzantine Empire with its effete provinces of Syria and Egypt, was falling into hopeless decay. In Persia, also, the Sassanian Dynasty was equally outworn and tottering. The keen breath of the desert air swept over both of these civilisations and they crumbled into dust.

Islam brought with it not only simplicity of living, but also a simplicity of faith. 'One God, one Brotherhood, One Faith.' This was a Puritan simplicity indeed, after the interminable wranglings over creeds which nobody understood and ceremonies which had lost all meaning! The idolatries, not only in Arabia, but in Christendom, were swept away. Life became one; life became simple. The poorest *fellahin* in Egypt and the most oppressed Syrian peasants found at least for a time a new

dignity of human brotherhood and common worship. The last words of the Prophet were cherished and remembered :

Ye Muslims, your lives and property are sacred and inviolable among you. Treat your women well, for they are in your hands, and ye have taken them on the security of God. See that ye feed your slaves with such food as ye eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff ye wear yourselves. Know that every Muslim is the brother of every other. All of you are equal. Ye are all of one brotherhood. I have fulfilled my mission. I have left among you a plain command, the Book of God, and manifest ordinances, the which if ye hold fast ye shall never go astray.

The lives of the early successors of the Prophet carried out in daily practice to a remarkable degree the precepts quoted above. Their conduct was marked by a severity of ascetic fervour which made them able to realise in their own experience the poverty of the poor. They had faith in God and sought to do His will. In their biographies, equally with the abstemious life of the Prophet, we can see the true saving of grace of Islam. Whatever its later developments may have been, at the courts of Damascus and Bagdad, at Cairo and Cordova, at Bokhara and Constantinople, it is essentially a faith which drives men back to bare and simple truth, to puritan ideals, to the equality of believers, to simple submission to the will of God in daily life. No Musalman can escape that austere aspect of human affairs. It comes before him, year in, year out, in fast and prayer.

Let me take a somewhat debatable instance of the result in history of this puritan attitude. No one, of course, would condone the brutalities of the earlier Muhammadan invasions of India under Mahmud of Ghazni and his successors. Muslim historians in India have been the first to condemn them. But when we contemplate India as a whole to-day, in the North as well as in the South, we can see how, in certain matters that are vital and essential, the North of India has been truly purged by the presence of Islam from the accumulation of dead and decaying matter which was unwholesome and even poisonous. If the miasma of caste pollution and the grosser mists of idol worship have been lifted from the atmosphere of Northern India more than from the South, it is not a little due to the constant presence

of a faith that swept aside the luxuriant ritual growth that had encumbered the pure worship of the One God, and insisted at the same time that in His presence all believers are equal.

I will turn to a further aspect of world history, that has not yet received sufficient recognition. In Africa, for over a thousand years, Islam has been the only binding force to hold together Society at a stage beyond that of the fighting tribe. The unmitigated horror and abomination of cannibalism, the cruelties of head-hunting and devil worship, the sexual promiscuity and infanticide, which represented in earlier times the daily life of savage tropical Africa, have been wonderfully tempered and subdued by the advent of Islam. Long before the days of the European occupation, there were Islamic kingdoms, with a literary language and culture, in the heart of Central Africa. Their population, numbering many millions, became immeasurably advanced beyond the savage tribes around, who had never embraced Islam.

It may be truly said, that wherever Islam has penetrated the interior of Africa, with its faith in the essential brotherhood of all believers, it has raised the status and human dignity of those who have confessed it as a living faith. Furthermore, in spite of the immense differences between man and man in Africa, owing to sharp grades of culture, there has been no serious practical breach in the citadel of religious democracy, for which Islam pre-eminently stands,—no caste barriers, no race exclusion, no colour prejudice.

In the New World, the Christian powers of Portugal and Spain carried out a ruthless massacre, accompanied by a no less ruthless slavery of the aboriginal population. In the end, the primitive peoples were almost blotted out. France and Great Britain were hardly less relentless in their dealings with the Red Indians in the North. The records of the shooting down at sight of the "Black-fellow" in Australia, and the hideous indenture traffic called "black-birding" in Polynesia, are notorious for infamy. They have darkened and defiled the page of human history.

It is true that slave-raids, such as those which Livingstone witnessed in East Africa, were carried out by Muhammadan

dealers. Their cruelty was no less hideous than the things I have mentioned. These cannot be condoned any more than the slave traffic of the Christian merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, which stained with tracks of blood the whole of the West African coast. But even when all this is recorded, it will be seen that wherever Islam has spread among savage tribes, it has not led in the long run to their decrease in numbers. It has not blotted out whole peoples. The inhabitants have remained in virtual possession of the soil, ready to be raised in the scale of civilisation in the future.

One other factor needs to be specially noticed. The original impulse of Islam in breaking down the tribal units in Arabia and consolidating the whole Arabian Peninsula into one religious brotherhood has had its influence in ever wider and wider areas. It is true that some of the bitterest quarrels in the history of the world have been between rival Mussalman powers, just as the rivalry of Christian powers in the Middle Ages seemed at times to be all the more bitter and prolonged because of their common Christian background. Yet, in spite of these surface rivalries, the Khilafat doctrine, along with the doctrine of the Haj,—the pilgrimage to Mecca,—has had a consolidating influence in building up a unity and brotherhood which has crossed the barriers of nations and empires and has represented a world-wide movement within Islam. There can be no doubt that this new-found unity of brotherhood, whenever realised afresh, has given life to mankind.

Whilst, however, all this that I have mentioned is undoubtedly true and must be taken into careful account in any estimation of Islam, there is another fact which must not be overlooked. The brotherhood which Islam contemplates is always a brotherhood of believers. This relation of Muslims to fellow believers is separated off by a sharp cut line of demarcation from the Muslim relation to unbelievers. The law of brotherhood is for believers. "Know", said the Prophet, "that every Muslim is the brother of every other. All of you are equal. Ye are all one brotherhood."

Nothing could be more pronounced than this stress upon the unity of all believers. Nothing could be more significant

than the precise limitation of this unity to believers only. It is here more than anywhere else that I find difficulty in reconciling Islam, in its present form, with universal religion and universal brotherhood. It would appear as though a certain exclusiveness were involved within the very structure of the Islamic faith.

It is true that the spirit of brotherhood engendered by Islam not unfrequently oversteps the barriers of formal creeds and overflows to all mankind. The whole Sufi Movement in India has this ideal behind it. Such a true brotherly love I have myself experienced within the homes and hearts of Muslims, who have been more than brothers to me. But the division of human life between Muslims and non-Muslims seems almost fundamental both in Muhammadan law and social obligation. The fact that to-day in the Twentieth Century any non-Muslim who ventured openly within the city of Mecca would do so at the peril of his life, makes painfully clear how hard and fast the line is still drawn.

I am well aware that Christianity has flagrantly denied in action the principle of universal brotherhood which its creed professes. I am also aware that Islam has far more effectively solved the race problem within its own borders than Christendom has done hitherto. Indeed, no apology for the Christian Church is possible as things stand to-day. The sin committed is against the light, and therefore it is all the greater. 'Race' Churches exist, in direct defiance of the will and spirit of the Founder of the Christian Faith. In the Southern States of North America and in South Africa the situation has become quite indefensible, and from the humane standpoint quite intolerable. Nevertheless the gulf of religion in Islam between believers and unbelievers is still unbridged, and there seems no way of bridging it except for the whole world to be converted to Islam.

With respect to the Islamic doctrine of the Unity of God I have no such criticism to offer. That is a supremely uniting and not a dividing faith. One of the greatest of all blessings which Islam has brought to East and West alike has been the emphasis which at a critical period in human history it placed

upon the Divine Unity. For during those Dark Ages both in East and West, from 600 to 1,000 A.D., this doctrine was in danger of being over-laid and obscured in Hinduism and in Christianity itself, owing to the immense accretions of subsidiary worships of countless saints and demi-gods and heroes. Islam has been, both to Europe and to India, in their darkest hour of aberration from the sovereign truth of God's unity, an invaluable corrective and deterrent. Indeed, without the final emphasis to this truth, which Islam gave from its central position,—facing India and facing Europe,—it is doubtful whether this idea of God as One could have obtained that established place in human thought, which is uncontested in the intellectual world to-day.

Furthermore, this divine truth which has thus been preserved by Islam is not merely an abstract postulate of scientific thought. Rather, it is the most vital of all experiences and the very soul of pure religion. More, perhaps, than anything else in Islam, it was this aspect of the Divine Unity which profoundly satisfied Raja Rammohan Roy. The note that is struck is a Puritan note. But throughout this essay I have come back again and again to the position, that it is as a purifying element in religion that Islam has brought the greatest benefit and blessing to mankind.

If I am able to do so, in a subsequent essay, I shall try to set down what appears to me to be the trend of the religious instinct in man as he looks out into the future.

THE REAL MEANING OF THE ISHOPANISHAD

By SRIKRISHNA SADASHIV GHARPURE.

Five years ago, a *shastri* friend of mine forced me, so to say, to read the Ishāvāsya Upanishad by myself, with what help I could get from the commentaries. Not much difficulty was experienced in going through the work; but what struck me and troubled me chiefly was the most objectionable character of the liberty which seemed to have been taken by Shankaracharya with the author while commenting on his work.

An honest reading between the lines is pardonable in a partisan or a propagandist; but to charge an author with false grammar of which he is not guilty, or to father on his words such meanings of their *synonyms* as the original words have not got, or to pretend to see a negative particle where the author has not used it, or to neglect some words as useless simply to bring out a meaning more to one's own liking, are artifices which should be below the dignity of even a partisan or a propagandist; to say nothing of an honest commentator, far less of a religious teacher.

This character of Shankaracharya's commentaries pained me greatly and I determined to do everything in my power to free the people from their effects, so far at least, as regards this excellent treatise; for, it is Shankaracharya whose opinions exercise the greatest influence on the people, and if these opinions had to be established, and have to be maintained, by such unfair means only, the sooner we get free from them the better!

But such dishonest commentary is not the only thing that I have to contend against in dealing with the Ishopanishad. In two places at least, I have been able to detect deliberate interpolations in the original text, which makes me rather suspicious about its genuineness in a few other places too. But I am unwilling to pose as a judge; the more so because in people's eyes I too may appear as a partisan. I therefore simply submit these two cases of interpolation to the scrutiny of Sanskrit scholars all over the world.

A. I shall take the case of the 8th mantra first, being the simpler of the two.

(1) By mere inspection one may easily see that the metre of this stanza requires 11 syllables in each line, and an additional one by way of poetical license, but never more than 12, all told. But the last line of this stanza contains no less than 17 syllables, a thing not to be expected of any poet, much less of the author of the Ishopanishad whose knowledge of grammar, logic and rhetoric is amply evidenced in this very treatise.

Against this objection of mine, it may be argued that lack of metre is the very characteristic of the Yajurveda of which this treatise is a part. But it is one thing to say that, unlike the Rigveda which is all poetry, most portions of the Yajurveda are in prose; and quite another to charge its metre, where it is in verse, with being more faulty than that of the Rigveda.

(2) Secondly, there is also a positive side to my objection. In this extraordinarily long line, if we just omit the first extraordinary word of five syllables, the remaining line of 12 syllables is exactly such as to fit into the metre.

(3) Then, thirdly, neither the word *yáthátathyatah* nor any word of a similar composition is to be found anywhere in the Vedas properly so called, except in this *one* place, where, as I have said above, it is altogether useless either to make up the required number of syllables, or to complete the sense. Such abstract nouns formed from adverbs belong to the period of logomachy, far removed from the Vedic period.

(4) Fourthly, this long word is positively inconvenient here; not only to the measure, but also to the sense; and cannot be construed in the sentence, except as a useless appendage, or unless we resort to the questionable artifice of replacing the word *samáh* by its masculine synonym *samvatsaráh* and translate this latter by *prajāpataya* which sense the original feminine noun *samáh* does never carry.

All these considerations, positive and negative, force me to conclude that the unusual word *yáthátathyatah* can not have been

used here by author, but has somehow come to be clapped into the text *in some after time*.*

B. This anomalous condition of the 8th mantra led me to scrutinize the 2nd mantra which also, as it stands, presents considerable difficulty in construing.

Here, the first half of the mantra constitutes one whole independent sentence; the last quarter too is one whole independent sentence; of course, then, the remaining third quarter must make at least one whole sentence.

(1) But here, the most curious thing is, that there is no subject, though there is a formal finite verb. It is impossible that any good author, much less the author of the Ishavasya who, as I have said, evidently knew the science of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, could have left his verb without a subject.

(2) Then, on the other hand, there is another most curious thing about the function of the second-personal pronoun in this place. A second-personal pronoun in the locative case, without any connection, direct or indirect, either with the whole sentence, or as its part, is absurd in a context where both the preceeding and the following sentences have got no second-personal pronoun, or even a nominative of address for which a second-personal pronoun could be used or understood.

(3) Therefore, the locative case of the second-personal pronoun could not have been there in the author's original text. It could not have been in the objective as the verb is intransitive and could not take any object; it could only be in the nominative, especially as the verb wants a subject; the proper form of the word being *tvam* and not *tvayi*.

(4) Then, again, there is no reason why the verb should have been in the third person: there is no third-personal subject, mentioned or understood, to agree with it; and as the second-personal pronoun claims to have been in the nominative; and there is no other claimant to that place, evidently the verb in the text

*My pupil and friend, W. Altekar, late Fellow of the Philosophic Institute of Amalner, suggests that like the word *agne* in the second mantra of the fourth mandala of the Rigveda, or like the word *jushethám* in the fifth mantra of the 58th hymn of the same mandala, this word may have been written in the text here by some writer from the *tippanis* which, in many cases, have been found to indulge in giving synonymus or explanatory words, between the lines or words of the text, in addition to what may have been said in the commentaries separately.

ought originally to have been in the *second person*, the proper form of the word being *asi* and not *asti*.

(5) These readings would moreover remove the difficulty of the vitiated metre, which exists with the readings we now have got there, it being impossible for the two syllables in different pitches to merge into each other so as to be pronounced together as one syllable.

These five considerations, each in turn leading to others, force me to conclude that the present reading of the second mantra cannot have been the original one given by the author.

Of course, the disappearance of the original readings in this place and the appearance of the present ones in their place cannot have been quite accidental, or by any mistake on the part of a writer or copyist as the one in the 8th mantra. It appears to have been purposed. Nor need we go far to see the motive. The whole mantra is diametrically opposed to the teaching of the absolute necessity of giving up all action in order to obtain final bliss; and it could not admit of being twisted into the opposite sense like the first mantra; which, but for its twisting by Shankaracharya, does not convey a sense in favour of the doctrine of *sannyás*, but wholly supports the doctrine of the necessity of action.

It would not be out of place if I give a translation of the first mantra here for reference :

Whatever changing or perishable thing (*i.e.* a thing capable of being used) exists here in this world, belongs to an owner (whoever he be). Thou mayst enjoy or use it only when it is given up by the owner (by reason of the return thou mayst make for it). Never covet another's property.

Well, after the first mantra had been twisted, when the commentator interested in *sannyás* came to the second mantra, there was no escape from the doctrine advocating action,* the first half being undeniably explicit and the last quarter not less so. Of course, the universal negative in the last quarter could be toned down if the word *nare* could be taken away from its original connection and put into another. But it could be so

*In this paper, by action I mean all kinds of work, such as one does or can do in this life, and not action in the limited sense of religious acts done with a view to the fruit to be got in heaven, as all religiously minded people take it to mean.

taken away only if there were a word in the locative case to agree with it. The only proper word which could admit of a case termination in whole second half was the second personal pronoun. Could not a change of its case answer? Supposing the case changed into the locative, what other changes would it occasion? The second personal verb would no longer hold. It must be changed into the third person. Would there be then no difficulty about construing? None. For, both the adverbs *evam* and *nanyatha* do admit of an absolute construction of a verb with them (this however is not true). Of course no hesitation would answer,—the thing had to be done.

(6) The anomaly of the second-personal pronoun in the locative case without any connection in the sentence was felt by Uvat and some other commentators also. To help themselves through the difficulty they suppose that the third-personal verb in the first half of the mantra may be a mistake (euphemistically called *ārshaprayoga*) for *jijivisheh*. I suspect that here too there may have been a deliberate change of *person* to ward off the suspicion which Shankaracharya, perhaps purposely, puts in the mouth of a pupil: "How could two different ways have been advised in two consecutive mantras without any preparatory or introductory device?" And, in the answer he, unlike Uvat, has indirectly maintained the third-personal verb as the proper one required.

There are two other places where I suspect purposed substitution of the one word *saha* for the two separate words *sah* and *ha* put in juxtaposition and together meaning "he alone"; which, too, as leaving no scope for any reservation in favour of *sannyās*, is no convenient reading for its votaries.

The *Ishāvāsya* Upanishad is, as I take it, a treatise on the *bráhma* religion or altruistic socialism, which aims at that higher *sannyās* which is advocated by the Bhagavat-gîta and which for its realization has to be co-ordinated with action. It shows how binding is the law of ownership, and how paramount is the necessity of continuous work in this life, work being the very essence of our life here, *as men*. The second half of the second mantra distinctly says: "Thus (*i.e.* by work and in work alone)

thou existeth and in no other way than thus ; no action can cling to *man*."

Of course living without work is a kind of suicide. The third mantra tells us how those who commit this suicide suffer. "They have to go to those places (in the life of mankind) which do not shine in light (*i.e.* which must have been meant for the evil beings) and are enveloped in dense darkness". Then two mantras follow and explain how the soul is not tarnished by action, as is often alleged. Then there are two mantras which describe the mental condition of the real workers which saves them from all evil effects of action ; and then in the 8th mantra is described the nature of a hero (*i.e.* a worker) bodily and mental.

Then in three more mantras is explained the principle that neither mere action nor mere knowledge can save you from the places of dense darkness, described in the third mantra. To escape them, you must have recourse to *both* action and knowledge, each having influence on the other, and use them according to your need and with discretion. So also neither the production of things, nor abstinence from making them or from their destruction, can save you, single-handed, from those places of dense darkness. But to escape these and to achieve your end of everlasting life and conquest over death, you must resort to any or all of these at discretion, as you feel their need. This, in short, is the teaching of the *Ishāvāsya* Upanishad, and comprises the gist of our *bráhma* religion, as I am going to show after the question in this paper is settled.

In the fifteenth mantra the poet complains how truth is hidden from us by a dazzling outside cover (of the learning of the faddists by which we are deceived), and prays the life-god, the Sun, to help us to see the real principle of religion. That principle, the poet further asserts, is the unity of the soul which we see in all individuals ; the body which makes one think oneself distinct from others being only a thing of the moment and actually reduced to ashes after death ; whereas the Soul is all-pervading and everlasting.

In conclusion, the poet offers a prayer on behalf of all people, praying Agni, the light god, "to guide us by the good

path to wealth and greatness, knowing as he does all arts, and to help us to fight the evils of crooked policy.”

The keynote of the whole treatise is that it will not do for us to give up all action for the supposed fear of its taint. We must work constantly if we have to live a *Man's* life. The only thing that we have to do to escape the taint of action is to regard all beings as ourself and to treat them as such while working.

Will the great Sanskrit scholars all over the world look squarely into the matter and save this excellent treatise from its present condition of a handmaid to any and every principle that may find an *Acharya* to advocate it?

The specific questions to be decided are :

1. Is or is not the word ‘*yáthátathyatah*’ at the beginning of the 4th line of the 8th mantra, an addition of after times? (I think it is).

2. Are there or are there not any indications of the second mantra having been tampered with, as I suspect? If there are any, which was most probably the original reading?

(I think the original reading was :

*Kurvanneveha karmáni jijivisheh shatam samáh,
Evam tvam nanyatheto'si nakarma lipyate nare.)*

Scholars who think it worth their while to respond to my appeal and bring their best judgment to bear on these questions should please send their answers direct to me, within six weeks from the issue of this number. I shall collate all the answers together and send the result for publication in the next number.

My Post office address is :
Satara City, Bombay Presidency.

MUSIC AND LIFE

An autobiographical fragment.

By ROMAIN ROLLAND.

(Translated by Dr. Kalidas Nag.)

A small city in the province of France. A house on the bank of a canal. The silence of slow, empty days. Before the wall of the terrace, a heavy boat glides down, towed by a cord at its beak. The odour of a Venetian lagoon mixes with the perfume of hyacinth and carnation from the garden.

A thin, sickly child, living alone without comrades, dreams and looks forward to Life. Within him and around him Life sleeps. In the small city, men speak only of politics or of business, and women of domestic inanities or of supine piety. Overhead, the limitless sky, closing upon the four walls of the court-yard, brightens, glitters, darkens and rekindles itself, like a large eye whose lids rise and fall with an impassive and fascinating regularity.

Suddenly amidst that silence, in the immobile brightness of the sky and of the heart, a swarm of bees seems to fly past : Mother is playing a little melody of Haydn. I am no longer alone, my heart trembles with emotion. . . . O sweet little Friend, have you got your eyes, your lips? I do not know, but I know that I love you and that you love me.

I had in my home the old German music books. German? Did I know what that word signified? In my part of the country, I believe, no one ever saw a man from that land. Rarely would I hear any one speaking about the "Germans",—only of the Prussians; and I need not say that their name was not spoken tenderly.

But did I not seek those spirits who made that music? Were they not for me only music, only creations of Art? I opened the old music papers, I tried to spell them out, stammering, on the piano; and from it came forth souls without body, fragments of souls; the smiles, the thrills of the heart, which melt into

agony; the transports of love or of faith; the memories, the desires, calm and resplendent; happiness without cause, profound melancholy without reason.

I was barely conscious of those musical emanations, and yet they became my intimate friends. Those streamlets of life, those rills of music which bathed my whole being and infiltrated it through and through, seemed to disappear like the rain-water which the lovely Earth drinks up. But they penetrate its surface; they go to form underground the vast sheet of calm water, reserve-stores of love and life.

Since then life might have been mediocræ, devoid of grand incidents, deprived of happiness and sympathy, but never could the Soul die of drought, the soul which had within itself the inexhaustible Spring.

Loves, sufferings, desires, capricious fantasies of Beethoven and of Mozart, you have become flesh of my flesh; I have absorbed you, you are mine, you are parts of me—mystery so differently mysterious from that of religion. A solitary soul had loved, dreamed, suffered, centuries ago. No one would know any longer what he was, really. Yet he is reborn in the heart of another solitary being who lives in another century, in a child as yet unconscious, bewildered, who does not know what all that means.

It is thus I feel, my German friends, that which palpitated in the heart of your old musicians. Had they been other than good, they might have ruined my soul; for they were masters of my self. . . . But what they have done me!

When as a child I was ill and feared that I would die—an old fear which, since then, I have forgotten partly through their help—such and such a phrase of Mozart seemed to keep watch over my pillow like a beloved Friend; I would have liked to have his hand in mine while dying, and to have him even in my tomb.

Later on, in the crisis of doubt and of negation which I passed through in my adolescence, some familiar melody of Beethoven has rekindled in me the spark of Eternal Life. Still later, when I felt weak, sad, persecuted, when I felt on me the crushing load of the hostile indifference of the world, I used to draw from the works of Wagner, a gigantic and joyous force

which helped me in marching on this world path. And always at any moment, whenever I feel my heart depressed and my spirit dried up, my piano is near me, I bathe in music, and always I come out young with a pure soul, fresh, full of illusion and hope.

While my heart was impregnated with your German music, my spirit followed a parallel path, different, quite French. I did not read German; my thought was nourished by French thought. My eyes, my intelligence, loved Latin beauty,—the harmonious lines, the clear ideas, the logic of dreams, the sovereign reason, the Light.

Thus two worlds were superimposed: the spirit wherewith I communed with my native soil, and, under that soil, the interior currents of water, the music, profound hidden soul, through which I was reunited not only with your soul of this present age but of past epochs. I have lived so much with your grandfathers that I feel sometimes that I may claim the title of their grandson more than many of you to-day.

And it so happened that one day, between that moving mass of obscure sentiments, of disembodied souls, and my French intellect, a passage opened up spontaneously, and the two worlds found themselves in contact. Then I had nothing else to do but to take cognisance of that which dreamed at the very depth of my being, and I found myself, as one says, to be a "Creator" of souls, without having thought about it. Those souls which I created, form a part of you, and I bring them back to you. . . .

Note—"Creator" is only a word. None of us is the real creator. The only Creatrix is the Eternal *Shakti*. —R. R.

(For Translator's note see p. 80)

SOME SANTAL SONGS

FROM THE COLLECTION OF S. C. MAJUMDAR.

[The Santals are one of the most important branches of the Kolarian people and are now to be found only in certain districts of West Bengal. Though in some respects Aryanised, they are still a simple, primitive and loveable folk. The songs, here presented in translation, have been collected from those actually sung by the communities living round about Santiniketan Asram, with which they are in intimate touch.]

Do not play your flute, Badan, by the bank of the river.
Why trouble the water that lies beneath the rock?

* * *

Early in the morning, mother, I was going to fetch water,—
Looking back, I found someone had broken the young tips
of the castor-plant.
When I had taken my bath, sitting on the big slab of stone,
and washed my hair,
I peeped into the water, and saw my shadow.
My youth has passed away!

* * *

Father, you dug a pool at the bend of the road across our village.
On its banks you planted trees of *tagar* flowers.
Father, I also have grown up like those trees;
But while their flowers have faded, this blossom of yours
is trembling in the breeze.

My sweetheart has his decoration of gold, and his ornaments
of silver.

Their vision haunts my mind.

Let me hang my dreams high up on the branches
of the tamarind tree at our door;
For they make me neglect my sweeping of our courtyard.

* * *

The tamarinds are swaying to the breeze in the orchard,
The mango branches are heavy with their clusters of fruit.
Come, mine own, to eat mangoes at our place;
I left my full pitcher by the pool in the sands,
to hasten to you, love, when I saw you coming.

* * *

There's a voice and a smile in the *banam*,* Muni,
There's a heart in the flute.
I am in your heart, Muni, and you are in mine.
On the webs floating in the sky, which bind everything together!

* * *

Numberless are the *mahua* trees in our land,
Their flowers they keep dropping through the day
and in the evening.
The breeze is envious, the sun is languid,—
What harm, my love, if in this day of the hot wind
You do not gather *mahuas*?

* * *

I have no girl of my own age here, unwedded still am I.
Needs must I go from here to some other land;
Or let me rather lean against a tree, raising my eyes
to the moon,
Entreating him to find me my mate.

*A kind of fiddle.

My mother is dead and so is my father.
Who is there to call me : "Come and sit here, child" ?
There's only the plantain tree in our courtyard.
It is my father and my mother as well,—
It calls me : "Child, come and sit here !"

* * *

Many of us are we, thick like a cluster of trees.
Grandly do we beat our drums, grandly do we dance,
swaying our limbs.
The women, they have to leave the babies in their arms,
to come and join us!

O mother, the drums, little and big, sound in the village.
As I listen and yearn, listen and yearn,
My body rocks like a lotus leaf on the water.

✻ ✻ ✻

The river bank is full of *kambir* flowers
The day wears on as I climb its steep side,
The night grows dark as I gather the blossoms,
The sun rises while I weave them into a garland.

* * *

My parents are like the moon,
My brother and sister are like the stars.
I was born under the yellow *sirguja* blossoms,
And my name is little Sunflower.

HOW JAPAN CAME TO ACCEPT THE WEST.

It was a curious example of social embryology that Japan should have assumed atavistic forms before its rebirth.

Our Unionist party consisted of men of advanced thought who considered that the unity of Japan should be accomplished at any cost, and that the crisis through which we passing involved international as well as national problems. Second to none in their adoration of the Mikado, they worked for the full restoration of his sovereignty; but their theory of administration, in returning to the democratic ideas of ancient China, stretched further back into antiquity than those of the other parties.

European and American republics, as at first understood by our scholars, reminded them curiously of the Golden Age of the Celestial Land. Untutored as yet in the darker side of western politics, they fell into extacies over those achievements of modern nations which seemed to them an actualisation of their own ideals. In George Washington they saw the Emperor Yaou of China relinquishing his throne to the ablest citizen. Montesquieu, with his triune theory of Government, was hailed as the Book of Mencius.

So, far from despising the West, the Unionist patriots laid themselves at its feet. It was not the novelty but the similarity of what they found that attracted them. Sakuma-Shozan first proposed to the authorities the employment of European instructors in all branches of study. He was also the first Japanese who adopted European costume. This idiosyncrasy of dress was actuated by a love of symbolism. Our kimono meant leisure, while the European costume meant activity, and it became the uniform of the army of progress, like the *chapeau rouge* in revolutionary France. Now-a-days a reaction has set in, and native dress is more generally worn by the progressives.

Sakuma-Shozan paid dearly for his pro-foreign leanings: he was assassinated at Kioto in 1866. Yet, despite conservative antagonism, western knowledge became more and more sought after as time advanced, until it has now become an inherent part of our national culture.

It must always be remembered, however, that our original movement towards the acquirement of foreign knowledge was fostered by the historic spirit.

—Okakura.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

From an address to the Indian Community in Japan.

Though I uphold the fundamental unity of the Asiatic mind, I must confess I do not believe in any characteristic which is exclusively Oriental, bearing no intimate relation to the western mind. All great human ideals are universal,—only in their grouping, emphasis and expression do they differ from one another. It is therefore necessary, while developing our individual character, to come into close contact with other races which may view from their own standpoint that truth which is also truth for us, but which has with us a special interpretation due to our special experience.

It is the mission of all great countries to complete their view of truth, not by merging their characteristics in those of another people, but by revealing their own personality. There can only be a co-ordination of truth, when the differences in the human world are cultivated and respected.

It is a momentous fact that you, my countrymen, for whatever purpose you may have come, have formed a community in this land. Through you, India must speak to Japan; and if possible the fact of your coming must be a glorious fact. Therefore, you must have a bond of unity among yourselves to give you a personality through which you will be able to communicate with Japan. If that is neglected, then you may return home with a full purse, but leave a gaping emptiness behind.

I have observed in some of you an attitude of mind, which is neither civil nor sympathetic. I have seen some among you, who take pleasure in dwelling on the dark side of the people among whom you have come to live. By this you are not acquiring anything of real value, but rather depriving yourselves

of the great pleasure which comes from appreciation. We all have our dark side; we in India also have our failings. If we wish to find fault, let us go back to our country and correct our own faults from inside, as kinsmen among kindred. Foreigners are always apt to distort and exaggerate. You know how the missionaries, when they criticise us in their own country, pick out the faults in our conduct and represent them out of proportion because they very often deliberately forget to temper them with our merits.

I know that the Englishman who, when he judges his own country, has a complete view of the personality of the people, rarely keeps this wholeness of judgment when he is outside his native land. He is intolerant of differences which may be quite inoffensive, but which for him become a grievance. He feels irritated when he hears English spoken by a foreigner with a wrong accent, or when he sees something peculiar in dress and manners to which he is not accustomed. I hope you will not cultivate such insularity of judgment and imagine yourselves to be superior to the people amongst whom you live, only because you are different from them.

For myself, I have come to discover something very great in the character of Japan. I am not blind to their faults. You may remember that when I first came to this part of the world I wrote a number of lectures upon Nationalism, which I read in the United States of America. The reason why these thoughts came to me in Japan was because it was here that I first saw the Nation, in all its naked ugliness, whose spirit we Orientals have borrowed from the West.

It came vividly before my eyes, because on the one hand there were the real people of Japan, producing wonderful works of art, and in the details of their life giving expression to inherited codes of social behaviour and honour, the spirit of *Bushido*: On the other hand, in contrast to the living side of the people, was the spirit of the Nation, arrogantly proud,

suffering from the one obsession, that it was different from all other Asiatic peoples.

Japan was faced with the most difficult trial of suddenly being startled into power and prosperity and had begun to show all the teeth and claws of the Nation, which have been demoralising the civilised world, spreading far and wide an appalling amount of cruelty and deception. I could not specially blame Japan for this, but I heartily deplored the fact that she, with her code of honour, her ideal of perfection and her belief in the need for grace in everyday life, could yet become infected with this epidemic of selfishness and with the boastfulness of egotism.

I frankly confess that I was then deeply mortified. For, though the people of Japan, on this first occasion, accepted me with enthusiastic welcome in the beginning, yet directly they came to know the ideas that I had, they felt nervous. They thought that idealism would weaken their morale; that ideals were not for those nations who must be unscrupulously strong; that the Nation must never have any feelings of disgust from the handling of diplomatic filth, or of shrinking from the use of weapons of brutal power. Human victims had to be sought, and the nation had to be enriched with plunder.

Nevertheless, I did not blame Japan for considering me to be dangerous. Though I felt the hurt of this evil, yet at the same time I knew that beneath the iron mail-coat of the Nation the living spirit of the People had been working in secret. To-day I feel sure that these people have the promise of a great future, though that may not be evident in the facts of the present. Truth is often hidden behind the obstacle of facts. Let me give you an instance from history.

Nobody can doubt that Europe has always had her great intellectual strength of mind. She shuns exaggeration, and seeks accuracy in dealing with the material world. She has dominated the whole of mankind to-day with a marvellous vigour and clearness of thought. But you will remember a time when

her people believed in witchcraft and tortured inoffensive women. They burnt Giordano Bruno for his greatness of genius, made it impossible for Galileo to speak out the truths of astronomy, and caused men to suffer unspeakable bodily pain when suspected of holding opinions a little more rational than the religious creed which it was held right and proper for them to believe. If you had built your theory of the European mind upon the facts of those days, Europe would have appeared the darkest place in the world, where freedom of thought was considered dangerous, and freedom of conscience impious. Yet even through these facts the vigorous intellect of Europe was all the time at work, silently and secretly.

I warn you never to rely on facts, to beware of keeping a superstitious faith in them. The truth which works in the obscure depth of facts is not obvious. It is like the underground stream of water, the fact of whose existence is contradicted by the rude rocks on the surface. One needs a power of vision and sympathy in order to discover the truth which is the innermost creative force of a people. I feel it strongly that we in India have many things to learn from Japan, if only we can be humble. Even those things in their civilisation which we cannot accept and admire, we ought to be able to understand, by viewing them in their proper place and perspective, and not by fixing them against the background of our own tradition and sentiment.

In every society there are elements that are not beautiful, but which are excusable when we know them in their full context. Therefore I ask you, my countrymen, be humble, be simple; avoid the critical attitude of the school-boy, and bring once more to this shore the true India, the India which was lovable herself, and which therefore could love others.

I deem myself fortunate in having noted this time certain characteristic truths in the Japanese race, which I believe will work through their subconscious mind and one day produce great results in a luminous revelation of their soul. Let me offer a few

sketches from the notebook of my memory which may give you a picture of their spirit.

Nine years ago, when I was living at Mr. Hara's house in Yokohama, it struck me everyday, in his beautiful garden, how working men would be coming out of the factories at midday and walking for a considerable distance to sit under the shade of his pine forest, silently to watch the meeting of the great sea and the sky for some five minutes, as though it were food and drink to them, and then walking all the way back to their work. This is a great achievement, that the whole people of the land should come to have a hunger for the beauty that is serene and great, that has no appeal to their sensual excitement; a beauty with which, in the busiest time of the day, they could steep their mind, and thus realise their freedom in the Infinite.

On every Saturday and Sunday, men, women and children would crowd through the different alleys and avenues of pines and oaks, threading their way to some open space in the mellow light of the afternoon. There was no sign of rowdiness, no trampling of grass or plucking of flowers, no strewing of the forest path with the peel of bananas, skins of oranges, or torn pieces of newspaper. There was no unseemly scene, no brawling drunkenness, no shrieking laughter, no menacing pugnacity.

These people belonged to the working classes. In other countries, we know what is the foundation of the enjoyment of such people, what strong sensations they need,—sensations which shew the insensitiveness of a mind which has to be roused by all kinds of rude jerks and shocks. But here, their holiday time seemed to me like the perfect flower of the lotus open to the pure light of the sky, to which they came like a joyous swarm of bees to sip the hidden honey in silence. This meant something great in the people and it won my heart.

It filled me almost with envy, as I wished for my own people such a fine gift of enjoyment. Have you no admiration for this marvellous achievement of theirs? It is this profound feeling for beauty, this calm sense of perfection, that is expressed in various ways in their daily conduct. The constant exercise of patience in their daily life is the patience of a strength, which

revels in the fashioning of exquisite behaviour with a self-control that is almost spiritual in its outward expression.

One day I was travelling in a motor car through the country, when we came upon a lumbering market cart which obstructed the way. What struck me specially was the patience of the motor driver. He uttered not a single rude word, but waited for a long while in perfect composure of mind and expression, until the cart could give him right of way. Each driver then saluted and we passed on. On another occasion, our motor car, by a mistake of the driver, knocked against a bicycle, and threw down the rider. In spite of his bruises he spoke not a word of recrimination, nor did he even refer to our driver's mistake. He simply got up, wiped the blood from his cheek, and rode away as if nothing had happened. This little incident represented a great fact.

In a variety of ways, I have seen in the conduct of the Japanese their wonderful self-control, and what seems to be a sense of forgiveness, or at least of mutual understanding. In the cases I have mentioned, both parties made silent allowance for each other's mistakes. This is not easy. It has required strenuous discipline and centuries of civilisation. I have travelled all over the world, and yet if I compare this with what prevails elsewhere, or in India, I shall have to confess that the Japanese possess a monopoly of certain elements of heroism,—a heroism which is one with their artistic genius. In its essence, it has a strong energy of movement; in its form, it has that perfect proportion which comes of self-mastery. It is a creation of two opposing forces, that of expression and that of repression.

I have often asked myself, how these special qualities of the Japanese originated.

Nature in Japan offers many contradictions in her physical aspect, which balance one another. On the one hand, there is an exuberance of vegetation, but not being in a tropical country this is under control. In our country, the forest has a dense undergrowth, in which weeds find the same indulgence as the great fruit-bearing trees. In a tropical climate, extravagant nature

finds no check in her exaggeration. In Japan, hard rocks and well-irrigated soil, the rich earth and the cold climate that does not tolerate utter intemperance of life, are found together; and they keep a balance between the different impulses of nature.

Improvident wealth becomes vulgar in its display of profusion. Only there, where wealth of strength and material combines with modesty of manifestation, does richness of truth find beauteous form. Nature in Japan has such cadence born of contradiction. Everywhere there is the contrast,—on the one hand of her hills, silent and motionless, and on the other, of her dancing streams, full of laughter. Surrounding her slim figure is the sea with its perpetual lure of adventure for men; while the rich fertility of her lowlands, tended by the rain from the sky and the rivers from her hill-sides, has its message of the settled life of agriculture, maintained by a complex code of moral obligation, mutual understanding and forbearance.

Out of all this, has been built a society contrary to the predatory civilisation, which for its food and materials depends upon exploitation, forcible or cunning. Her sea gives her children courage and curiosity for new experiences; it has made them familiar with the mutability of life. Not having the idea of stability in her earth, which has its seat upon the restless shoulders of the demon Earthquake, the close neighbourhood of life and death has constantly been made evident to her children. The play of sudden changes, terrible in might, against the background of a unique world of beauty, tender and yet majestic, has made her mind easily adaptable to new ideas, all the while keeping her own personality pure and firm, imparting to new thoughts her own meaning, and to new forms her own magic of beauty.

There is a further contrast in the field of the mind. Buddhism is a religion which calls to meditation and introspection, to self-control and self-emancipation, repression of passion and cultivation of sympathy. In opposition to this, owing to their cold climate and hilly country, to their need of intensive effort for producing the necessities of life within the narrow boundaries of her islands, a vigorous mentality has been developed in her children, and their character has been moulded into a greatness in which are mingled self-confidence with self-

mastery, force of decision with grace of skill, love of existence with forgetfulness of death, active courage with patient consideration.

These people have thus come to believe in a heroism which is not in self-exaggeration, but in a resigned spirit that can quietly accept either action or inaction, as honour or duty might dictate. Therein lies the beauty of their strength; it is in that detachment of mind, which does not forget the ideal of excellence in its greed and hurry for result. When I first saw their flower decoration, on my former visit to Japan, they told me how a great hero in their history had said that the contemplation of it helped him in his fighting. That is to say, perfect heroism finds its inspiration in the music of truth which is in beauty.

The convulsive and artificial cult of self-mutilation Japan has never accepted as a means of attaining virility, or spiritual excellence; for she has received her lesson from nature's own teaching. She knows that in the tenderest of life's manifestations there is not only more strength, but also more heroism, than in the rugged asceticism of the rocks. The real strength is not in the vast desert, but in the green grass, whose triumphant life survives the trampling march of time in an endless resurrection of beauty. Our character shows its weakness when it confuses rudeness with strength; when it is self-assertive in its stark asceticism. Our self is given to us to bring it into harmony with our soul by giving it the immortality of perfection, not by killing it and thus impoverishing the soul herself. Our heroism finds its true foundation in the enrichment of soul which comes of the enrichment of self. For, in the perfection of form dwells the perfection of spirit.

Japan must prove to the world that the present utilitarian spirit may be wedded to beauty. If Science and Art, necessity and joy, the machine and life, are once united, that will be a great day. At present, Science is shamelessly dissociated from Art. She is a barbarian, boastful of her immense muscle and superficial nature. But has she not come at last to the gate of

the truth, which gives us the mystery of the beautiful? Has she not proved that it is Rhythm itself which is in the heart of Reality? She has suddenly stumbled upon the dance-music of creation. It has been revealed to her, that every atom is a ring-dance of lights round a luminous centre. Only a difference in their dance measure is responsible for the difference in the elements. It is through the chain of these varied dances, which are the cadence of beauty, that this universe of Reality has its play in the courtyard of time and space. Any torture of the chain of beauty, any break in it, is evil; because it hurts the very spirit of reality, which is one in its physical appearance and in its moral and spiritual meaning. By killing the best expression of reality, which is beauty, we enfeeble its soul which is moral and spiritual.

Though we often find in the Japan of to-day a hysteria of violence in her politics, an unscrupulous greed in her commerce, and an undignified lack of reticence in her public life, which makes us anxious for the moment, yet let us feel certain that all these have been borrowed from the outside, that they have no deep root in her mind. Let us hope that the truth which they have in their inner being, will work through all contradictions and express itself through unaccountable ways in some sudden outbreak of revelation.

Great periods of history are periods of eruption, unlooked for and seemingly against the times, but they have all along been cradled in the dark chamber of the people's inner nature. The ugly spirit of the market has come from across the sea into the beautiful land of Japan. It may, for the time, find its lodging in the guest-house of the people; but their home will ultimately banish it. For it is a menace to the genius of her race, a sacrilege to the best that she has attained and must keep safe, not only for her own salvation, but for the glory of all humanity.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN.

I

Rabindranath's Farewell to Milan.

The first welcome of hospitality in this country has come to me from Milan, whence it was proposed I should begin my tour in Italy. The very few days I have been able to spend here were made so overflowing full with the generosity of kindness, that they have brought Italy close to me and given me a feeling that I have known her for long.

It is a rare privilege for a stranger to find the heart of a great country open to him, without having wearily to wait and repeatedly to knock at the gate. How I have deserved this honour I know not, but I know how to appreciate it and cherish it in my memory.

I take my farewell of Milan with an inner assurance that I shall find my seat ready in a warm corner of her heart when I come back,—which will be before long, if my own wish be realised.

II.

Note on Romain Rolland's autobiographical fragment.

By DR. KALIDAS NAG.

(see p. 64.)

Thanks to the spirit of perennial self-purification in Man, even this age of discords has its incarnations of Harmony. Rabindranath and Romain Rolland have thundered, with simultaneous prophetic voice, against its lamentable backsliding, its atavistic regression of culture. Yes, there is harmony in this thunder. Read *Nationalism* and *Creative Unity*; read *Au-dessus de la mêlée* and *Empedocle d'Agrigente*. We need not despair for Humanity so long as there are such individuals who believe in human fellowship as the base-note of History.

But neither Tagore, nor Rolland, is a musician by accident or necessity. No doubt as champions of internationalism and peace, their dominant musical note sounded above the pandemonium of world politics ;

no doubt they are honoured in the republic of letters as Master Harmonists ; no doubt music is the supreme passion with both of them ; yet music is much more to Tagore and Rolland,—it is the soul of their art creations, the very essence of their being.

Tagore sang long before he learnt to lisp in rhyme, and throughout his life music remains to him his supreme consolation. His *Gītānjali* (Song-offerings), his *Gīti-mālya* (Song-garlands) are song wooings of his Divine Lover. To understand Tagore the poet, or Tagore the prophet, one must understand Tagore the musician. Through music he soars above the suffocating atmosphere of current history, the region of deadly actuality, and wafts us to the heaven of Eternal Harmony.

By quite a different path, following a different line of evolution, Romain Rolland reaches the same vantage ground over current history. Initiated into the mysteries of music by his gifted mother, the one dream of Rolland's life has been to interpret humanity in terms of music. In spite of all the tragic cruelty of his life, Rolland never for a moment deviated from the path of his musical *abhisāra*, the lover's quest of the Supreme Harmony.

While still a boy, Rolland would go every day from Paris to Versailles, just to translate his joys and sorrows, his dreams and aspirations, on the piano of a friend, for he could not afford to have an instrument of his own. He was not able to consecrate his life to music, and fulfil the cherished dream of his life to become a composer himself. Nevertheless he persevered in his passionate quest, to emerge as the greatest musical critic of his age,—nay more than a mere critic,—a revealer, a creator.

The first to be appointed a professor of Musical History, Rolland devoted ten years of his life (1902-1912) to the proper elucidation and appreciation of music through his erudite and illuminating lectures before the Paris University. His opening lecture "About the place of Music in general History", was as much an original reading of History as of Music.

So it is in the fitness of things that Romain Rolland should be the first to harmonise the jarring notes of modern history into a supreme musical creation in his *Jean Christophe* a veritable epic of modern life ; unique alike in amplitude and intensity are its improvisations on Life and Death, Love and Immortality, with their equal distribution of glamour

and gloom, of lyric moonbeam and epic thunder,—a tenth symphony (the unfulfilled dream of Beethoven) achieved by this Beethoven of Romance.

That is why, even amidst the terrible depression of this crisis in Civilisation we may gather courage to sing with the immortal creator of Jean Christophe :

—Thou shalt be born again. Take rest. There is nothing but one heart for all. The smile of the night and of the day embrace each other. O Harmony, august marriage of Love and Hatred! I sing to the God with the two powerful wings: Victory to Life! Victory to Death!

III

The Soul of the East.

(*Rabindranath to the Japanese Passengers on Board the S-S. "Suwa-Maru".*)

My friends, it is unfortunate that the medium of language between us is a foggy medium, which makes it difficult for me to give you a clear idea of what I have in my mind about your country, which I have just visited. It is in any case, always a delicate thing for a foreigner to tell his host what he thinks of him,—especially where he has been so generously welcomed and entertained. I recognise that the desire, which you have to know what a visitor thinks about your country, is natural and does not come from any longing for flattery on your part. We realise what we are, through understanding how we react upon others, and then only do we truly know ourselves; so I sympathise with you in your wish to know my own impressions about you.

You must first of all consider, that a man who comes to a foreign land is bound to carry with him his own traditional habits of thinking and his prejudices, of whatever kind they may be. We none of us bring a clean slate. We already have some opinions from our reading books that are far from accurate, and from our own bias and personal habits; and, therefore, you cannot accept such opinions as final, and have to make allowances for personal temperament.

We very often criticise other people from a standpoint that is wrong and inadequate; like a man, habituated to the use of curved scimitars, who complains of the shape of scabbards made for straight swords; or a traveller, who has only known a horse for a steed, finding an elephant unmannerly because of the length of his nose! In a strange land, where

we see strange things, we have hardly any standard of judgment. But we should not exaggerate this side of the matter over-much ; for, being human all of us, in whatever country we may live, we can understand one another in spite of barriers ; and I truly believe that I have been able to understand Japan. When I say this, I simply mean that I have been able to love your people. That proves conclusively that I have found something positive, not (accidental ;) something universal, not merely ephemeral. Love itself is perfect understanding.

I have often noticed that European visitors try to see in you something similar to themselves, and when they observe how well you have managed to handle things borrowed from the West—railways, telegraphs, post offices, and the like—they express their satisfaction. I have read a remark made by an English traveller, that Japan according to him does not belong to the 'East', nor China ; they are almost 'Western'. Only India it would appear, is truly in the Orient. This traveller came with his own bias and critical intellect : and through that he saw all that he saw.

Well, I must confess that I have brought with me, to the Far East, my Eastern mind with its own vision. It is not scientific it is not analytical. I could not help judging you with that mind of mine, which belongs to Asia. I tried to find out what you are, and not what you have, not what you could borrow from the West. What difference did I find between the Western point of view and that of the East? That is the question I had to put before myself ; and I would like to give you the answer which I found.

I think that we, in the East, have more faith in personality, in human relationship. All our attachments are keenly personal, human. Science deals with the impersonal, the non-human, the mechanical, the things that can be weighed and measured and tabulated. These are useful things, no doubt. Through them we can organise our forces better in certain respects than through mere personal ways, producing accurate, standardised articles by the million, every one of them monotonously the same. That makes you think you have got the exact thing and feel that you are not cheated.

It may be that, in our Eastern countries, people have not such sense of accuracy in external things, of which we, therefore, often make a mess and thereupon win laughter from the West, which concludes that we are not worthy of any great responsibility because we cannot master their

machine.' But one fact we must remember and try to find out its significance, namely, that all the oldest and longest civilizations have been Eastern.

Great Greece only lived a very short time. Great Rome is now nowhere. We find immense vicissitudes among modern Western nations, which even now, are in such a condition, that we cannot be satisfied as to their permanence.

But on the other hand, look at China. It is easy to say that her central government is fearfully mismanaged, but we must acknowledge that the people are living, are civilized, are peaceful, in their relations to one another, and acknowledge their obligations to their surrounding neighbours with a high code of social ethics, handed down from the past. China is the oldest civilisation. There must be some meaning in this. It cannot be accidental. Truth only survives. Anything that is untrue dies. When we find a people with a long and continuous history, we must know that it has found some elixir of life. Even their drawbacks prove their vitality ; for they show that China was able to survive in spite of them all. Could you imagine any other nation suffering from such political mistakes, corruption and maladministration, and not being broken into pieces? But China shows no sign of final dissolution. Deep in the heart, she has the living human personality ; and to this, chiefly, she owes her wonderful vitality.

"Well," I said to myself when I saw all this, "here is the secret of the East. The mystery of Everlasting Life the East did solve and here is the solution." I tried, when I came to Japan, to find out if you also had found this solution.

It is tautology to speak of "man" as "human ;" but it contains a profound truth. For it is 'man' that is all important, it is 'man' who lives, not the machine. If any nation has this gift of conserving its human relations, then that is life, eternal life ; for that is man's truth, man's ideal, man's goal—not railways, factories and machinery, but humanity. So I asked myself concerning the Japanese, when I came to your country : "Are they human ; or are they merely efficient? Are they mere organisers, efficient organisers like the West, or are there beneath all these borrowed feathers human hearts?"

You will notice that metaphor about 'borrowed feathers.' Feathers do not produce a voice. Voice comes only from life itself. That English traveller, who wrote his book on Japan, saw the complexion of your

borrowed feathers and said: "How marvellous!" But he did not hear your living voice, for he had not the faculty wherewith to hear what comes from the heart of Japan. I hope I have heard it, and it gladdened my heart more than I can possibly say. I found your soul. That which is external,—your science, your organisation,—that you got from your school-masters. But that is not you. It is the 'human' element, that is you. It is the 'human' touch that gives life.

In China, foreigners fix their tentacles round this huge unwieldy people. They are all ready to suck out its life blood. Some on the other hand, are trying their spells—their fascination of benevolence. Poor China is in a sorry plight. But I felt that China was really living in those of her people, who had never been to Harvard; had never seen skyscrapers; had never used the word Democracy. How close to nature they are, and so how living! This closeness to nature is their life. It accounts for their permanence.

Wonderful words I listened to in China. Wonderful words they were which ancient China taught. And side by side with them, I listened also to those who had their western education. I cannot describe to you my surprise at the words of one of them who wished to empty a beautiful lake, in the midst of the College grounds, and turn it into a 'campus.' Fancy! This from a Chinese, who had inherited the gift of life, not from any machine, not from the West, but from the perfect rhythm of nature which his forefathers had mastered. This speech about turning the lake into a campus, coming from a Chinese, was tragic.

As I watched the Chinese, I found that everything they produced, with their marvellous fingers, was a marvel of beauty. I said: "Oh what a great civilisation this must be, not what the West has called 'progress', but the true civilisation." I had the same feeling about Japan. I saw the shadow of the West lengthening. I saw beauty being swallowed up by western ideas. You are also using these words about 'progress' which the West has taught you. But, when I came closer, I found the same deeply human touch. It is a creative spirit that you have. For it is in this human element that creation lies. The machine is not creative.

Japan can never forget her creative gift, which she has received from of old. 'I do not mean merely your artistic gift; most certainly I do not mean at all those things you borrow and imitate. There you make awful blunders. Whenever I have seen those imitations. I have wondered how your feeling of beauty could so desert you that your choice in such things

should always go astray, and the result be so often ludicrous, third-rate, wrong in every way.

But when you handle your own things, there is ever that efficiency which is graceful, which is living. For you have the peculiar proficiency which has grace in it as well as utility. To take one example only,—when you offer a gift to anyone, the care you take about it, and the way you offer it, make it beautiful. This shows that you are not in haste. You have leisure for the little gracious acts that are human.

Men in haste want to multiply profit. Profit is good in its place. But man is man, and not merely a profit-making automaton. The man who goes on making profits, until he drops down dead in the counting-house,—what beauty, what humanity, is there in his life? Such persons are more like dolls, having one movement only which they repeat, never coming to any final meaning at all.

This ludicrous 'efficiency', which the West has cultivated to the utmost pitch, is doing such enormous mischief, that it is going to be the death of Man some day. If the machine is at last triumphant, man will be crushed. But I have felt in Japan, in spite of this superficial aspect, a deep human touch in your relationship. You acknowledge personal relationships everywhere. Your government is not a mere Government, but a Person ; because your whole civilisation is personal.

Things are going wrong in China. Everywhere they acknowledge personal responsibility yet they say that in the centre they must have some bodiless ghost, some abstraction, called a Republic, from the West. It is all right for the West,—this so-called Republican Government. They do not want personality, they want efficiency. China does not say that. Nay, she says, rather, that the human is to be at the origin, in the middle, and everywhere ; and her whole civilisation proclaims the triumph of the human. Yet, obsessed by her western schoolmasters, China has insisted on becoming a Republic.

As I have said, a republic may be all right in its place ; but not where civilisation is all-varied in mutual obligation. There is, in China and Japan, a whole nervous system of such mutual obligation. You cannot trifle with that. It is a great gift. It is the wonderfully complicated and delicate nervous system which makes the human body one. So with the Eastern civilisation. It is this nervous system of the body-politic based on mutual obligation, which makes for its unity. All classes are bound in the East not by contract, but by this inner living bond of unity.

This has given the Eastern Civilisation its humanity ; and because of this it has produced great ideals. We are grateful to the West for its Science, but all the great religious Ideals, which save our human nature from wreckage, have sprung from the East, because in the East we believe in the person, not in the machine. We therefore only make ourselves a laughing stock when we copy the West. But our Eastern hearts are touched at once, when we meet with human kindness.

I must confess to you, I am very nervous in the West. I have never yet got quite over my stage fright. I was paid so much to lecture and was treated accordingly, as though I was to do everything according to a contract, in an inhuman business relation, and the suffering was enormous. But from the first day that I entered your country—even before then, on board the steamer,—I was truly your guest. Directly you asked me to come and lecture, I had your hospitality. How nice it was, how kind, how human.

You might easily have said : “We are going to pay this man so many dollars. It is all on contract. And if we don’t like what he says we can laugh and shout him down and tell him to go back.” But this could never happen in Japan or China. Do not think I merely spoke nice things about you. Sometimes I spoke severe things, because I loved you. I felt I had the right to do so, the right of love. When you committed crimes, I spoke out. I said : “Let these people of the West have their triumph. Let us suffer in silence, but never let us copy them in their inhumanity. Behave always as your true selves.” You might, in answer to their insults, have produced some Klu Klux Klan,—I hardly know how to pronounce the name. But you did not.

Be gentle, be patient ; for that will save you ; that will make you live ; that will give you life everlasting,—not machine guns, not poison gas, not bomb-throwing-aeroplanes ; in the end, man will only survive where he is human, and not where he is demoniacally making profits. No. Let us, at least, have respect for humanity, and let us not follow in the wake of those who are not so much concerned in nourishing and protecting the truth of Man, as in the so-called interests of what they call their Nordic Race.

Let them rule. But we shall gain our rights of sovereignty in a higher world than theirs,—in the spiritual world. There the East has ruled the West in the past, through its great spiritual leaders. Now, even

in that there is a downfall in the West, and the spiritual leadership of the East is acknowledged no longer.

But let us accept our moral responsibility as Asiatics. Say with pride that you are not of the West ; that you believe in Dharma more than in profit-making. I have seen that you in Japan have this greatness. If, I did not see it I should hold my head down. You have your loyalty to man, your love for man, you have infinite patience in little things. All these, and many others, are human traits. They will make you great,—not scientific toys and dressed-up dolls from the West.

I do not belittle the West. Truth is very valuable, and the West has given to us new intellectual truth. But a Devil may make use of it ; and science has lost its divinity through the handling that the West has given it. They have made you swallow drugs, moral and material even when you wanted to avoid them. They have imposed insults on you which it will take generations to forget.

Therefore the East must stand firm. The East must exercise her own judgment and reject the encroachment of the inhuman, keeping firm her faith and waiting patiently for a great future. Let again once more, the Sun arise on the Eastern horizon ; and, when the morning does come, it will not be ushered in by the rumbling of market carts, and the clatter of commodities, but by the music of faith.

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

Vol. III.

JULY, 1925

No. 2

THE INDIAN IDEAL OF MARRIAGE

BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

A request has come to me from Europe to say something about the Indian idea of marriage. This puts me in mind of the difference between the European and the Indian idea,—a difference which is not merely of outer method, but of inner purpose.

Like all distinctive features of civilised societies, the marriage system is an attempt at compromise between the biological purposes of Nature and the sociological purposes of Man; and both its outer form and inner aim depends upon the divergence between these two. For, in his individual as well as in his social life, man is governed by this Diarchy.

Thus, where society is complex with a net-work of widely-ramified relationships, the natural propensities have to be kept in check by social pressure from every side. While, where wants are numerous and their supply difficult, and man is compelled to venture forth to distant places to make a living, there the social obligations need must be light, and the nature and extent of the mutual claims of individuals over one another cannot be rigidly prescribed by society, but must be left to be adjusted by the individuals themselves.

It is a matter of comment by Europeans that we use no word like "thanks" in our own language, for expressing gratitude; and they jump to the conclusion that our character must be free from that troublesome feeling. But the fact is, that in our society the obligation of the giver of help is held to be stronger than that of the recipient. On him who has acquired learning

is cast the duty of giving to others,—that is not taken as a favour done by teacher to student. The offering of hospitality even to the casual visitor, is incumbent on the householder for his own sake. Each of the domestic ceremonies, from the birth-celebration to the funeral, is but an expression of the debt which each member owes to his community. From this it becomes evident that our society is not like a stream on which its members float in comparative freedom, but like the earth in whose depths their root-system is held secure.

The Aryans of India were at first forest dwellers. Then as the dense screen of forest was lifted off the stage of their history, India's broad, river-served plains were converted from sylvan shelters of patriarchal communities into monarchical territories; and agriculture became the mainstay of her growing settlements. On the one hand, the close neighbourhood of peoples, racially different, giving rise to perpetual cultural conflict; and, on the other, the agricultural civilisation claiming co-operation and the complex regulations of stable life,—these are the two forces that moulded Hindu society and still guide its course. Such a society can never exist and perform its functions unless peace is maintained amongst its members by a perfect system of mutual adjustment of rights.

In the beginning of India's history, of which we gain glimpses in the Rāmāyana, three different parties are to be distinguished,—the Aryans, the barbarians (variously called monkeys, bears, etc.) and the powerful, cultured Rākshasas. While all these were at daggers drawn, their constant dissensions precluded the establishment of any common social polity. Then, as the conquering Kshatriyas extended their sway, and populous settlements grew up in their wake, the need for peace was felt and its merits were exalted. So, broadly speaking, the establishment of relationships between the Aryans, the barbarians and the Rākshasas, form the main theme of the Rāmāyana.

Courage, in the ethics of Peace, means the courage of self-sacrifice; there, bravery has for its object the triumph of Renunciation. And, in societies where such sacrifice and renunciation are cultivated, not the individual but the household is the primary unit, and such household is broad, not narrow in

conception and content. That is why, as the *Rámáyana* evolves from a collection of ballads into an epic, its main function is transformed from a narration of struggles against the outrages offered to the cult of tillage (*sítá*) into the exaltation of the Ethics of the Household. The unfaltering strength of self-renunciation which is needful for keeping true the varied relations between king and subject, father and son, brother and brother, husband and wife, master and servant, and among neighbours different in colour and character,—that is what it really glorifies.

Wherever many men have congregated, not for the purpose of attacking others, but for mutual benefit, there is evolved a mentality which eventually transcends all considerations of expediency and envisages Supreme Good as an absolute fulfilment. And so, in our country, there was a day when the household was glorified, not as a comfortable home, not as the enjoyment of proprietary right, but as the means of living the fullest communal life, and through it of attaining supreme liberation at the end.

The intimacy of relationship with wife and child is but natural, and so may hardly help to loosen the bonds of self,—rather it serves to strengthen them. But the household wherein even the most distant of kinsmen have a recognised right, where one's own earnings have to be shared by those who are almost strangers, where it is a matter of shame and censure if differences be made between near and distant relations,—there the claims of moral welfare override those of natural affection, and give rise to certain special qualities of heart. These gradually grow so powerful that both the individual as well as the social conscience refuse to tolerate any personal claims when these conflict with those of the household *dharma*.

Therefore the home of the Indian has never been looked upon as his castle, the place where he is lord and master. No doubt the duty, there cast on him, of considering the rights of others on any and every occasion, has involved him in expenditure of time and money, but his accounts have ever been cast up, not in terms of self-interest, but of social and spiritual welfare.

In societies where the household is founded on the comfort and convenience of the individual, his acceptance or non-

acceptance of the householders' estate remains optional. If any such should say that he does not care for domestic joys, but prefers the freedom of irresponsibility, no room for objection is left. But in Hindu India, because the household is an essential element in its social structure, marriage is almost compulsory,—like conscription in Europe on the threat of war.

According to our Lawgivers, anyone making gifts to, or taking gifts from, a Brahmin who remains a householder, but does not marry, goes to hell. Says Atri: "No hospitality should be accepted from an unmarried householder." The household has been compared, in our *śāstras*, to a great tree; for, just as the roots of the latter support its branches, twigs and foliage, so does the life of the household maintain the different institutions of society; and the Lawgiver lays it down that the King should do honour to the upholder of the householders' estate. But the mere fact of setting up a household, anyhow, does not constitute that estate according to our *śāstras*:

**Grihasthopi kriyáyukto na grihena grihásramī,
Na chaiva putradārena svakarma parivarjita.**

Not by the house is made the household, but by the performance of the householders' duties,—nor even by wife and children, if the householder be wanting in his own karma.

Karma here does not mean the looking after his family interests, but the performance of his specific duty,—the fulfilment of his obligation to society.

**Tathá tathaiva káryāni na kálastu vidhiyate,
Asminneva prayujjāno hyasminneva tu liyate.**

With society are we connected, in it do we terminate this life, therefore should we do our duty as it arises, and not await our own convenience.

To perform the duties of a householder is in fact looked upon as a spiritual discipline. Says Vasistha:

**Grihastha eva yajate grihasthastapyate tapah,
Chaturṇámásramánāntu grihasthastu vishishyate.**

That is to say, because the life of a householder is a life of self-abnegation having its manifold obligations to gods and men,

therefore of all the four *āśramas*, the *āśrama* or estate of the householder is specially distinguished.

In societies where the household is but the means of ensuring the comfort and security of the individual, the notion of property also becomes intensely individualistic; for the right of property is at the base of the householders' estate. And when property is viewed as dedicated to individual enjoyment, it ceases as such to be a joy to the others who own it not, but becomes rather an object of their envy. Not only that, but in the process of its acquisition the question of social or moral welfare is lost sight of, and the spirit of rivalry and competition acknowledges no limit. And so, in ancient India, the class of merchants whose object in life was to acquire wealth in excess of the requirements of their livelihood, were held in contempt. Even to-day, water touched by such is deemed to be impure.

A school of thought has arisen in Europe which looks upon property as inherently vicious, and would advise its forcible extirpation. For, there, the irresponsible ownership of property is a potent factor in maintaining the antagonism between the claims of universal humanity and of individual man. And, so far, Western Politics has devoted its forces to the protection of the rights of the proprietor. Hence the need for this counter-movement.

But many substances which are now good food, were once unpalatable or even poisonous. Man, however, did not reject these at the outset, but made them wholesome and toothsome by a long process of culture. India, likewise, cultivated the viciousness out of property by converting the household into a field for spiritual discipline. And thus society in India stably maintained itself for centuries on the basis of the individual ownership of property; in fact India's wealth of food and clothing, education, morals and religion were all so acquired,—by virtue of that original precautionary measure.

When the welfare of society is left to depend on the voluntary generosity of its wealthy members, then is the vicious aspect of property brought out; for the indiscriminate acceptance of charity spoils the recipient. But, in India, expenditure by the householder for social welfare was not a matter of generosity, but of primary

duty in the interests of his own fulfilment. Such duty was cast not only on the rich, but also on the poor, according to their means. Manu says : “The *rishis*, the forefathers, the gods, the guests, and all living creatures, expect to be maintained by the householder. Knowing this, he should act accordingly.” By many such injunctions and in diverse other ways, are the Indian people kept reminded that the *dharma* of the householder consists in fulfilling the various claims of humanity. And further, in Manu’s opinion, those who are of weak character and have no control over their passions,—they are not worthy of the householders’ high estate.

In order to understand the principle underlying Hindu marriage, it is necessary first to come to a true appreciation of this principle underlying the Hindu social system. It will then become clear that, in this type of society, having for its object the perfection of communal life, there is danger in allowing marriage to pursue the path of self-will. Such a society can only withstand the encroachments of Nature, if its marriage system is walled round with a protective embankment. So the Hindu ideal of marriage has no regard for individual taste or inclination,—it is, rather, afraid of them.

If any European would really understand the psychology behind this, let him bethink himself of the state of things that obtained during the last war. Ordinarily, in Europe, there is no bar to international marriages. But, when the one objective of the war overshadowed all other considerations, marriage with the subject of an enemy country became an impossibility; so much so, that European society felt no compunction in cruelly severing even long-standing marriage ties of this description. Not only was the marriage question so affected, but during war conditions, food and all other amenities of life had to be cut down to a uniform standard. The personal liberty and elasticity of occupation, so characteristic of Western civilisation, tended wholly to disappear.

These war conditions afford a good parallel to the permanent conditions which govern Hindu society, where the encroachment of alien cultures has always been a constant danger to be guarded against. This vital objective of the twice-born leaders, who

practically represented the whole people, therefore runs as a steady undercurrent through our society. The problem of keeping its civilisation pure having been acknowledged as all-important, and its solution thus sought by India, her society has had to claim of its members the severe and permanent curbing of their individual liberty of choice and action.

Indian society, however, did not reach this stage all at once. It was gradually evolved through successive adaptations to changing circumstances. Meanwhile many relics of earlier stages survived into the later. Therefore Manu had to recognise, in his treatise, different other forms of marriage, such as the *Gándharva* (by mutual choice), *Rákshasa* (by conquest), *Asur* (by purchase), *Paishácha* (by taking advantage of helplessness). In none of these is the social will manifest, but only the desire of the individual; for force whether of arms, or money, or circumstances, is arrogant and passion refuses to submit to extraneous considerations. But, while recording these forms, Manu censured them.

Though the *Gándharva* marriage, founded on mutual attraction, was also one of those which did not find favour with the Lawgiver, it nevertheless long persisted in Indian society, as our epics and other literature make clear. This only shows that, however conservatively stable a society may be, the principle of stability cannot be equally strong amongst all the classes which it comprises. In the Kshatriya character, especially, the cultivation of self-suppression was least likely to attain its fullest development. It is not possible to keep confined in a complex net of social obligations the warrior spirit which ever seeks fresh fields for expansion. It is for this reason that our *shástras* prohibited the crossing of the sea. Any adventurous activity whatsoever, that may loosen our mind from its mooring and disturb the fixed habit of our thought and belief and behaviour, is bound to undermine the very foundation of our society.

Not only sea voyage, but also residence in foreign countries with antagonistic social ideals, was prohibited and penalised. In the West we find now-a-days all kinds of forcible attempts being made to prevent the intrusion of Bolshevich ideas. This is comparable with our prohibition of foreign travel. No penalty is

deemed too severe if it but keep in check the propaganda which, it is apprehended, may destroy the elements essential for the stability of the orthodox Western social system. The liberty of the people to form their own opinions, to regulate their own conduct, is here no longer respected. The terrorist organisation called Fascism, which seems to be daily gaining ground in Europe, is the exact counterpart of our rigorous social injunctions. There was a day in India when for the Sudra to aspire to the path of the Brahmin entailed the death penalty. The same psychological phenomenon is seen in the West in the cruel forms of Lynching, Fascism, Ku-Klux-Klanism, and the like.

It is no doubt conducive to a certain strength if all the members of a society are, in the main, moulded in accordance with some uniform standard. That may be a bar to the fullest development of its individuals, but it certainly does help to keep the society, as a whole, in a state of stable equilibrium. And, if any society, on the cessation of its growth, should come to pride itself on being, not like a growing tree, but like a temple of which its securely established immoveableness is its glory, it will inevitably feel the moving of a single one of its bricks to be a loss. Nevertheless it is not possible to keep all the members of any society uniformly bound in such unalterable fixity—that is against the nature of man and destructive of the principle of life itself. So that, so long as any people is vigorously alive, they or some of them cannot but keep breaking through the rules and prohibitions imposed by their society. Both in its biological and sociological phases, these opposing forces of conservation and experimentation, are characteristic of Life.

Anyhow, so long as the Kshatriyas were real Kshatriyas, it was not found possible to keep them rigorously bound down to the habitual performance of the prescribed rules for daily observance. That is why, in the history of ancient India, at the bottom of all the social and religious revolutions, were the Kshatriyas. We must remember that Buddha was a Kshatriya, that Mahāvīra was a Kshatriya; and that the clan, to which Śrīkrishna himself belonged, was not famous for observing the precepts and prohibitions most esteemed by the Lawgivers. If we read through the Mahābhārata, we are reminded at every turn

that, however determined may have been the endeavour to protect society behind a permanent embankment, there was not a single kingly clan of note which did not break through the walls. It was only in comparatively recent times, when the Kshatriyas had lost their virility and the Brahmins had gained almost unquestioned ascendancy, that it became possible to make the social bonds so rigorously inert.

Manu gives the name of *Gándharva* to marriage by mutual choice, and signifies his disapprobation by stigmatising it as 'born of desire.' The way to marriage, which is shown by the torchlight of passion, has not for its goal the welfare of society, but the satisfaction of desire. Even in Europe, where the obligation of the individual to society is much lighter, it is well known how the mingling of the sexes under the impulse of passion often gives rise to anti-social difficulties; but there, society being mobile, the effects are not so deep as with us. In our *shástras*, therefore, the *Bráhma* marriage is considered to be the best. According to this, the bride should be given to a man who had not solicited her. If the institution of marriage has to be regulated strictly from the social standpoint, room cannot be found for the personal wishes of the people concerned. So, the system which obtains in the case of the Royal Houses of Europe, is the system which prevails throughout Hindu society.

Another way for the better understanding by the European of the mentality underlying our marriage system, would be by reference to the discussions on eugenics, which are a feature of modern Europe. The science of Eugenics, like all other sciences, attaches but little weight to personal sentiment. According to it, selection by personal inclination must be rigorously regulated for the sake of the progeny. If the principle involved be once admitted, marriage needs must be rescued from the control of the heart, and brought under the province of the intellect, otherwise insoluble problems will keep on arising; for passion reckes not consequences, nor brooks interference by outside judges.

To return to our Kshatriyas, they were, as I have indicated, not in the habit of observing with any strictness the social rules relating to marriage. But it becomes clear from the poems of

Kalidas, that there was a struggle of protest in his mind against this laxity of their observance. The Poet keenly felt the value of the eugenic restrictions which were directed towards maintaining the racial ideals pure, and yet his heart could not fail to be moved by the beauty of the play of the natural loves of man and woman against the background of the exuberance of the Universal Life. In most of the great works of Kalidas are treated the conflict of these opposities. The coming of the line of the Bháratas was a great event in the History of India. But though the prelude of unbridled desire, which ushered in the founder of the line, has been viewed by the Poet in its aspect of Beauty in the first part of the play, he has corrected it from the standpoint of the Good towards the conclusion.

Amidst the natural beauty of the forest hermitage, Sakuntalá's youth blossoms out in prodigal curves of body and mind, along with the exstasy of form and movement in the flowering trees and creepers around her. Everywhere in this retreat does Nature beckon, but Society, as yet, has found no loophole through which to obtrude the warning of her uplifted finger. Sakuntalá's secret union with King Dushyanta, which takes place amidst these surroundings, is not in harmony with the rest of society. So, according to the Poet, the curse comes upon her. She overlooks, in her self-absorption, the duty of hospitality; for when Nature is busy securing any special purpose, she throws all other purposes into the background. Society thereupon exacts its penalty and, in the Kings' audience hall, the inevitable thunderbolt of insult and rejection falls upon Sakuntalá.

In the seventh Act, the picture which the Poet draws of the hermitage, in which is consummated King Dushyanta's final union with Sakuntalá, now purified by discipline, is everywhere full of the rigour of renunciation, eclipsing the life-play of Nature. In the opening scene, the King is informed that the *Rishi* is busy expounding the *dharma* of the wifely estate. Sakuntalá, here, is seen as the emblem of devotion, the Mother. It is clear that the Poet's object was vividly to contrast these two pictures of the relations of woman to man, the one carrying the bondage of desire, the other the detachment of *dharma*.

Motherhood, in so far as it is concerned with the physical nurture of offspring, is not essentially different in man and the lower animals, being a function of biological, not of sociological life, governed by instincts which are of nature, not by man's own creative power. But where the mother undergoes voluntary penance for the elevation of the human race, keeping her natural instincts in rigorous subordination to the dictates of mind and soul, there indeed is her own creative power at work. Now-a-days in the West, we often find women feeling a certain degradation in becoming subject to Maternity; that is to say, they feel the insult of having to submit to this tyranny of Nature over their sex. But the way for woman to avoid such insult is not by abjuring Motherhood, but by making it subserve her ideal, by bringing it under the control of her own intellect and conscience. How far India's conscious activity in the past—this striving of hers for the best possible progeny—was fully consonant with the conclusions of modern science, is not the question here. The point is, that just by such intellectual and spiritual vigilance can the human Mother achieve her true dignity.

In his *Kumára-sambhava* it is the same thing that the Poet tells us. There he has shown the divine aspect of the eternal love of man and woman. When the Titans have won paradise, and banished the gods therefrom, the love of man and woman, transformed into ascetic striving, wins back heaven from the insult of defeat. The gods are eternally awaiting the birth of *Kumára*, the conqueror of evil. And, in order to achieve this birth, the passion of desire must be transmuted into pure, disciplined endeavour. The rigorous aspect of such achievement is the truth which is beauty. The beauty of Illusion is gorgeous in its adornment, the beauty of Freedom is naked.

In all the three of his works, the *Raghu-vamsa*, the *Kumára-sambhava* and *Sakuntalá*, India's Poet has looked upon marriage as a state of discipline, not intended for gaining individual happiness but of which the method is the control of desire and the object to bring about the birth of the Slayer of Evil, the super-man who will make possible the achievement of heaven on earth. The agony of the Poet which we glimpse in each of these, springs from his consciousness of the degeneracy

which was overtaking society through the flagrant disregard by the Kshatriya kings of the Aryan ideal of marriage. And the Poet sends out his call to bring away the union of man and woman from the realm of Kāmarpa (*Eros*) into the hermitage of Shiva, the Good. This Indian ideal of marriage can be much more vividly understood from the works of the Poet than from any Dharma-shāstra.

Here the question arises that, if desire be banished from the very threshold of marriage, how can love find any place in the wedded life? Those who have no true acquaintance with our country, and whose marriage system is entirely different, take it for granted that the Hindu marriage is loveless. But do we not know of our own knowledge how false is such conclusion?

If we accept the institution of marriage, we must also admit that no system can be devised to ensure that its original object shall remain true throughout the long period covered by the life of the wedded couple. That is why, both law and public opinion have to keep such vigilant watch from the outside. But when external compulsion tries to bind together those whom only mutual love can truly unite, it makes their relations inherently impure,—in fact, no greater insult can be offered to man. Yet, all over the civilised world, man submits even to this for the sake of the welfare of his children. So far, no society has been able to claim that it has arrived at a faultless solution of the difficulty. In entering the married state we have all to make our plunge into the doubtful and leave it to providence whether we shall sink, or swim through.

The “desire,” however, against which India’s solution of the marriage problem declared war, is one of Nature’s most powerful fighters; consequently, the question of how to overcome it was not an easy one. There is a particular age, said India, at which this attraction between the sexes reaches its height, so if marriage is to be regulated according to the social will, it must be finished with before such age. Hence the Indian custom of early marriage.

This brings to my mind the conversation I once had with an Agriculturist. I was complaining to him of the lack of common grazing grounds in our villages, whereupon he told me

that it was a mistake to suppose that a cow would thrive best if allowed to graze at will. Scientific feeding with specially cultivated fodder-crops could only yield the best results. These must have been the lines of argument, in regard to married love, pursued in our country. For the purpose of marriage, spontaneous love is unreliable, its proper cultivation should yield the best results,—such was the conclusion,—and this cultivation should begin before marriage. Therefore from their earliest years, the husband as an idea, is held up before our girls, in verse and story, through ceremonial and worship. When at length they get this “husband”, he is to them not a person but a principle, like Loyalty, Patriotism, or such other abstractions which owe their immense strength to the fact that the best part of them is our own creation and therefore part of our inner being.

There is also in our society the glorification of the *Satî*, the ideal wife; and, accordingly, a real reverence for woman, as the embodiment of housewifely virtues, is not rare in our country. The idea was, in both cases, to replace the natural passion of sexual love by the cultivated emotion of wedded love. But, it must be admitted that woman being emotional by nature, it has not been as easy for man thus to idealise the married state as it has been for her. It must also be admitted that the restraints and restrictions prescribed in the case of the man have not been so rigorous as those for the woman.

Therefore, in coming to our judgement on the marriage system of India, we must not fail to recognise the fact that therein the man and the woman are not on a footing of equality. Such inequality would have utterly humiliated her, but that, for the wife, the husband is an idea. She has not surrendered herself to the brute force of another, but voluntarily consecrated herself to the service of her own ideal. And if the husband is a man of sensitive soul the flame of this ideal love is transmitted to his own life also. Such mutual illumination it has often been our lot to witness.

There is yet another vital element in India's culture which we must keep in mind. In spite of her exaltation of the household estate, India did not look upon this as man's ultimate stage. According to India's ideal, even the home must be given up in

due course, in quest of the Infinite,—the household, in fact, is only to be set up as an important stage in this quest. Even to-day, we see our householders, when their children are grown up, leaving their home to spend the rest of their life in some place of pilgrimage. Here is another pair of opposities which India attempted to reconcile. On the one hand, her civilisation is essentially bound up in the home, albeit a home in which a wide circle of relationships find their place. On the other, its endeavour is, one by one, to snap all earthly ties in its pursuit of the liberation of the soul. In fact, it recognises the social bonds because it is only through their acceptance that they can be transcended. In order to get rid of the natural desires of man, they must be used up; that is to say, guided by the spirit of renunciation to their own extinction. Here we find the difference between Hinduism and Buddhism. In its relations with Nature, Buddhism is uncompromisingly anarchist from the very outset.

The weakness of the Hindu system lies in the fact that its complex web is too closely knit, and that the least loosening of its fibre, in any of its parts, tends to its disruption. It is afraid of the contact of the outside because the bond which holds it together is that of external regulation, whose strength depends upon habitual conformity. But self-segregation for any society is no longer practicable in this age. For, while it may be possible to prevent the man on this side of the sea from crossing to the other, what about preventing those on the other side from coming over here?

So have alien ideas, alien systems, alien customs, breaking in through her embankments, dashed upon India in a multitudinous flood, making visible breaches in all the habits and beliefs which were the pillars of her social system. Further, apart from this disturbance of her inward life, there has been the more effective attack of an alien economic system; for, without a sufficiency of food, it is impossible for the various relationships of her complex society to be kept together. And, just as foreign ideas come pouring in on our mental world, so do our foodstuffs, caught up in various currents of commerce, keep flowing away towards foreign lands. So that the people of our

country, in their social dealings, are now compelled to keep careful count of their meagre resources. Lastly, there is the nemesis of the unrealised ideal, which overtakes any civilisation when, by reason of flagging vitality, it fails in the earnestness of its pursuit, and lapses into the stagnation of mechanical habits. Every living organism is constantly confronted with the waste products of its own fatigue, for which its vital forces, while active, find natural means of elimination. The adoption of complex external devices is of no avail when vitality is on the wane, for they only tend to weaken the natural functions still further, if not to create new forms of weakness and disease. The civilisations which flourished for a time, and have disappeared, are those which committed suicide, clinging on to their own toxic products, by suppressing, under the urgency of their special purposes, the cleansing impulses provided by Nature.

Anyhow, the special qualities of head and heart, which once found varied support in our broad social system, are now dying out for lack of opportunity for their exercise; meanwhile it has not been possible to effect a corresponding change in the structure of our society; with the result, that while all its restrictions keep on hampering us, their original object and justification have become impossible of acknowledgement. And so, on every side, are the members of this vast society overwhelmed with futility. In particular, the very basis of our marriage system having been undermined, there is no longer any harmony of adjustment between the underlying ideals and the actual facts of our modern marriages. One section of our people keeps crying out for a return of the *Satya-yuga*, but that golden age refuses to respond to their call. The time has, therefore, come for us to think out our problems afresh, to correlate our thoughts and conclusions with those of all humanity.

The gulf of separation, which Nature has contrived between the sexes, has preserved in its atmosphere the varied play of a powerful mutual attraction. This force which is creative,—but destructive as well,—continually sends its awakening message to our souls from behind the veil. If we screen off society from its forceful activity, that may conduce to its own safety, but will surely reduce it to passivity. In our language we call the

power of woman over man by the name of *shakti*. Deprived of *shakti* the creative process in society languishes, and man, losing his vitality, becomes mechanical in his habits. In such case, though he may still retain many a passive quality, all energy of activity forsakes him. The manner in which the relations between the sexes have been regulated in our country, has left no room for the action of this *shakti*; for, as we have seen, our society, with immovable stability as its objective, has been busy cultivating the passive qualities, ever in dread of individual forcefulness. Now that our country has awakened to outside influences, she finds herself powerless to resist alien aggression. She has even lost the faculty of recognising that her weakness proceeds from within her own social system, and is not the outcome of any outward accident.

In every society, its civilisation is the territory conquered in its contest with Nature. And since in our country this contest was long and bitter, everywhere we find its fences more in evidence than its roads. But because there was once a good reason for this state of things, it does not help to save her when the reason has ceased to exist. Her barriers which kept the outsider off, now keep herself confined.

It seems that in the age which has now come upon us, man is thinking of giving up the desperate hope of victoriously keeping up this constant struggle. He would now make his peace with Nature,—and that duty has been entrusted to Science. But the marriage system of every society belongs to an age when, in the Parliament of Life, man was sitting on the opposition benches against Nature's government. And Nature has ever retaliated against his obstructive tactics. Up to now they have nowhere come to any satisfactory agreement. That is why these ubiquitous attempts at the external regulation of man's most intimate relations, have been insulting his best feelings and degrading the greatest of his institutions, all over the world.

Let me, as an individual Indian, offer in conclusion my own personal contribution to the discussion of the marriage question generally.

There are two parallel activities in the human world, the

one which carries forward the stream of population : the other, the civilisation of man. The first chiefly belongs to the realm of Life, and the second to that of Mind. In the creation of progeny, man's part though essential, is secondary. After he has once roused the passive seed, in woman's keeping, to vital activity, all the travail of child-bearing and parturition are hers alone. It is because of this comparative lightness of the male function in the propagation of the species, that we find instances of the killing off of superfluous males in the insect world, and of the keeping down of the number of male beasts by internecine struggles due to the savage jealousy which is their characteristic ; shewing the minor importance of this sex for the purpose of biological creation.

But, when Mind evolved itself into greatness, man found the opportunity to gain glory for his sex in the scheme of human development. For, while woman remained entangled in the specific duties which Life had assigned to her, man, with his greater freedom therefrom, was able to respond to the call of his intellect and engage in various work of creation in the world of Mind,—in fact he created the sphere of his own usefulness. In this, the first chapter of civilisation, when Mind was in the ascendant, woman in her turn dropped into the second place, not only as less useful, but even as an actual impediment ; for the world which was her special creation, constantly sought to throw its toils round the adventurous spirit of man as well. This comparative unimportance of woman in the birth stage of civilisation, clings to her still. That is why the rebellious section of womankind would curtail her responsibilities in the region of Life, in order to enable her to claim equality with man in the work of his creation of society.

Opportunities, however, cannot be artificially created. The propensities of heart, strongly ingrained in woman's nature, cannot be dislodged by attacks from the outside. The tendency of these propensities of hers are towards holding fast, and not progressing onwards. So it is only by adherence to the cult of preservation that woman can attain her true welfare. If she desperately engages in adventurous pursuits, she will at every step come into conflict with her own inner nature, and thus

constantly distracted, she can never succeed in competing with man in his own special sphere. But just as man, after a long period of subordination during the ascendancy of Life, was enabled to get rid of his disabilities in a subsequent stage, so woman too may look forward to a yet higher regime whereunder she will have the right to emerge from her present subjection. It is difficult to decide what to call this next stage; for the word "*spiritual*" is so beset with controversy regarding its true meaning. However, let me for my present purpose give it that name.

The inner qualities of the woman's heart, result in an important by-product, which may be called *charm*. This charm, like light, is a force. Intangible, imponderable though it be, the strivings of our intellect may not attain fruition if deprived of its life-giving touch. The nourishment which the tree draws though its roots may be classified and measured,—not so the vitality which is the gift of the sunlight, and without which its functioning becomes altogether impossible.

This ineffable emanation of woman's nature has, from the first, played its part in the creations of man, unobtrusively but inevitably. Had man's mind not been energised by the inner working of woman's vital charm, he would never have attained his successes. Of all the higher achievements of civilisation,—the devotion of the toiler, the valour of the brave, the creations of the artist,—the secret spring is to be found in woman's influence. In the clash and battle of primitive civilisation, the action of woman's *shakti* is not clearly manifest; but, as civilisation becomes spiritual in the course of its development, and the union of man with man is acknowledged to be more important than the differences between them, the charm of woman gets the opportunity to become the predominant factor. Such spiritual civilisation can only be upheld if the emotion of woman and the intellect of man are contributed in usual shares for its purposes. Then their respective contributions may combine gloriously in ever-fresh creations, and their difference will no longer make for inequality.

Woman, let me repeat, has two aspects,—in one she is the Mother; in the other, the Beloved. I have already spoken of the spiritual endeavour that characterises the first, *viz.*, the

striving, not merely for giving birth to her child, but for creating the best possible child,—not as an addition to the number of men, but as one of the heroic souls who may win victory in man's eternal fight against evil in his social life and natural surroundings. As the Beloved, it is woman's part to infuse life into all the aspirations of man; and the spiritual power that enables her to do so I have called *charm*, and was known in India by the name of *shakti*.

There is a poem called *Ananda-laharī* (The stream of Delight), attributed to Shankarāchārya. She who is glorified therein is the *Shakti* in the heart of the Universe, the Giver of Joy, the Inspirer of Activity. On the one hand, we know and use the world; on the other we are related to it by ties of disinterested joy. We can know the world because it is a manifestation of Truth: we rejoice in it because it is an expression of Joy. "Who would have striven for life," says the *Rishi*, "if this *ánanda* (joy) had not filled the sky." It seems to me that the "Intellectual Beauty", whose praises Shelley has sung, is identical with this *Ananda*. And it is this same *ánanda* which the poet of *Ananda-laharī* has visualised as the woman; that is to say, in his view, this Universal *Shakti* is manifest in human Society in the nature of Woman. In this manifestation is her charm. Let no one confuse this *shakti* with mere "sweetness", for in this charm there is a combination of several qualities,—patience, self-abnegation, sensitive intelligence, grace in thought, word and behaviour,—the reticent expression of rhythmic life, the tenderness and terribleness of love; at its core, moreover, is that self-radiant Spirit of Delight which ever gives itself up.

This *shakti*, this joy-giving power of woman as the Beloved, has up to now largely been dissipated by the greed of man, who has sought to use it for the purposes of his individual enjoyment, corrupting it, confining it, like his property, within jealously-guarded limits. That has also obstructed for woman herself her inward realisation of the full glory of her own *shakti*. Her personality has been insulted at every turn by being made to display its power of delectation within a circumscribed arena. It is because she has not found her true place in the great world,

that she sometimes tries to capture man's special estate as a desperate means of coming into her own. But it is not by coming out of her home that woman can gain her liberty. Her liberation can only be effected in a society where her true *shakti*, her *ānanda*, is given the widest and highest scope for its activity. Man has already achieved the means of self-expansion in public activity without giving up his individual concerns. When, likewise, any society shall be able to offer a larger field for the creative work of woman's special faculty, without detracting from her creative work in the home, then in such society will the true union of man and woman become possible.

The marriage system all over the world, from the earliest ages till now, is a barrier in the way of such true union. That is why woman's *shakti*, in all existing societies, is so shamefully wasted and corrupted. That is why, in every country marriage is still more or less of a prison house for the confinement of woman,—with all its guards wearing the badge of the dominant male. That is why man, by dint of his efforts to bind woman, has made her the strongest of fetters for his own bondage. That is why woman is debarred from adding to the spiritual wealth of society by the perfection of her own nature, and all human societies are weighed down with the burden of the resulting poverty.

The civilisation of man has not, up to now, loyally recognised the reign of the Spirit. Therefore the married state is still one of the most fruitful sources of the unhappiness and downfall of man, of his disgrace and humiliation. But those who believe that society is a manifestation of the spirit, will assuredly not rest in their endeavours till they have rescued human marriage relations from outrage by the brute forces of society,—till they have thereby given free play to the force of Love in all the concerns of humanity.

THE OLDER ELEMENTS IN INDO-ARYAN RELIGION

By DR. STEN KONOW.

When the Aryans came to India, they brought with them a double inheritance. They had spent a considerable time together with their Iranian brothers, who also called themselves Aryans, and the two tribes had developed a common civilisation, which had left its traces in their religious conceptions. And these prehistoric Aryans were, in their turn, the descendants of older tribes, whom we may call Indo-European, with their own ancient religious ideas and rites.

In order to understand the development of religious thought in Aryan India we must accordingly first try to find out what was inherited from the Aryan and from the Indo-European periods, because this inheritance was the fundament on which their religion was built up.

Formerly it was usual to see in the Rigveda a picture of Indo-European religion, because some of the usual terms could be traced in the religious literature of other ancient Indo-European peoples as well. The word *deva*, god, is identical with Latin *deus*, and it is also traceable in Old-Norwegian *tivar*. *Dyaus pitar*, the Sky Father, is the Greek *Zeus pater*, the Latin *Juppiter*, and *Dyaus* is also found in the Germanic tradition, which speaks of *Tyr*, German *Ziu*, who is there the god of war. *Ushas*, the dawn, is the Greek *eos*, the Latin *aurora*; *surya*, the sun, the Greek *helios*; *agni*, fire, the Latin *ignis*, etc.

It was believed that we can trace a rich Indo-European mythology, and from the etymological meaning of the word *deva*, god, *lit.* shining, and the character of the individual gods, the conclusion was drawn that the Indo-European ancestors worshipped light and celestial bodies and the phenomena of nature, and that they had a notion of a supreme God, the Sky Father, who was sometimes compared with the Christian God, the good and merciful father of man.

We now know that the picture was wrongly drawn. It is true that the Indo-Europeans spoke of *devas*, gods connected with light and the sky, but they also seem to have had other designations for their gods. Such ancient tales and traditions as seem to go back into Indo-European times, are chiefly tales about marvellous deeds, and not about individual gods. For the names of the heroes of such tales differ from people to people.

We get the impression that individual gods had hardly been developed. In India it is Indra who wields the thunderbolt, while in Greece Zeus, and in Rome Juppiter does so; and the Germanic tribes speak of a god Thunderer. From this we would naturally draw the inference that the fundamental idea was the belief in a mystic force manifested in thundering, and behind this force they saw a vague personality, because they were accustomed to find a personal agent behind the powerful act. Later on the wielding of the thunderbolt was ascribed to such gods as were considered to be pre-eminently fitted for it, to Indra in India and to Zeus in Greece. But this seems to be a secondary development.

The name which has played the greatest rôle in the speculations of the old mythological school, is *Dyaus pitar*. A critical analysis of the material has shown that we do not, in reality, know anything about the conceptions covered by this name. We only know the name itself. In the Rîgveda, however, the Sky Father is commonly mentioned together with *Prthivi matar*, the Earth Mother, and if this combination could be proved to have been inherited from the Indo-European period, we might perhaps draw some further inferences.

I think that such in reality is the case. Tacitus tells us about certain Germanic tribes who worshipped *Nerthus*, the Earth Mother, and traces of a similar worship are found with other Indo-European peoples. I even think it probable that the observances described in Tacitus' account of the *Nerthus*-worship are genetically related to similar ceremonies in connection with the Indian Durgâ-pûja, in other words that we have in India and in the Germanic north two different branches of one ancient tree: an Indo-European worship of the Earth Mother with a

complicated ritual, aiming at increasing and instigating the fertility of the earth and the generative power generally, where-with we seem to be able to trace a male deity in addition to the goddess.

There is another Indian conception which may help us to understand the matter still better. In addition to *Dyaus pitar* we have a *Mánush pitar*, the Man Father, the ancestor of the human race or rather of the Aryans. If we compare the two terms, it will be seen that the second word must be the most important one, just as in the designation *Prthivi matar*. What is meant is not the Sky or Man as father, but the Father, *i.e.* the idea of fatherhood or active generation, as manifested in Sky and Man respectively.

And, so far as I can see, we here have before us the fundamental notion in Indo-European religiosity. The gods were not personifications of light, or of the phenomenon of nature, but the worship was directed towards primeval forces and potencies, behind which more or less vague personalities were seen. Such forces might be met with in the sun, in fire, in water and in other natural objects, but also elsewhere, in all the multifarious vicissitudes of life. Everywhere man had to reckon with such forces, everywhere he might be confronted with uncontrollable mystic power.

It is customary to speak of the limited horizon of primitive races like the ancient Indo-Europeans. And we are, in a certain sense, quite justified in doing so. On the other hand we may also say that they lived in a much larger world than we do. Not only did human beings, animals, trees, and so forth, have their life, but such was also the case with what we call lifeless objects, and further with all sorts of ideas and notions, which we are accustomed to consider as abstract conceptions, such as force, strength, thought, fulness, destruction. It is the so-called pre-animistic or pan-vitalistic mentality with which we are everywhere met, and which is conspicuous in the Indo-European element in Indo-Aryan religion. And, as we shall see, it has never become quite overgrown.

The next stage of development in the history of the Indo-Aryan religions was reached in the so-called Aryan period, when

the Indian and Iranian Aryans had not yet split up into two branches. We have no direct sources from which to study the social and religious physiognomy of the period. Such information as can be gathered, is derived from a comparison of the most ancient Indian and Iranian sources, the Rigveda and the Avesta.

The first thing which strikes us is, that we find a new designation of the gods, in addition to the old *deva*, viz. *asura*, or, as the word sounds in Iranian, *ahura*.

Two such *Asuras* can, with almost absolute certainty, be assigned to the Iranian period. In the Rigveda we hear about the mighty *asuras*, Mitra and Varuna, and their names are often brought together in a *dvandva*-compound, which shows that they were thought to be intimately connected with each other. In the Avesta we find a similar couple, Ahura and Mithra, whose names are likewise compounded in *dvandva*, and there can hardly be any doubt that the whole conception is common Aryan. The name Varuna seems, however, to have been coined on Indian soil.

In later Iranian sources Mithra appears as a personification of the sun, and he is usually considered as an old sun-god. Also the Vedic Mitra is frequently mentioned in connection with the day and with light, while Varuna seems to be more frequently brought into connection with the night. He has therefore often been identified with the moon, as an old moon-god, while other scholars have compared his name with Greek Ouranos, heaven, and explained him as a personification of heaven, more especially the vaulted night-heaven.

Such explanations are quite in agreement with the current conception of Indian and Indo-European religion as a worship of light and the celestial bodies. But they are nothing more than guesses. And there are several considerations which can be urged against them.

In the first place we do not always find Mitra brought into connection with day, and Varuna, or his Iranian counterpart Ahura, with night. In the Iranian language of Ancient Khotan, Urmayzde i.e. Ahura Mazdah, the later development of the ancient Iranian Ahura, has become the name of the sun. Further the sun is often in the Vedas described as Mitra's or

Varuna's eye, and such would scarcely have been the case if one of these gods were considered to be identical with the sun. At all events, it would be very difficult to understand how the sun could be called Varuna's eye if Varuna were the moon.

Further, an analysis of the features mentioned in connection with the two great Asuras, especially in the Rigveda, seems to lead us away from sun and moon, and in quite a different direction.

There is one important word which very frequently occurs in connection with these gods,—the Sanskrit *rita*, old-Iranian *asha*, or probably more correctly *urta*. We do not know the etymology of this word. In Iranian it seems to mean *purity*, righteousness, and is invoked almost as a deity. In the Vedas, *rita* means *truth*,—that which really is and not only appears to be,—the eternal reality.

It is now of importance to note that the Iranian *Mithra* and *Ahura* are described as friends of *asha*, while the Vedic *Mitra* and *Varuna* are the guardians of *rita*,—*ritasya gopau*. The connection of the two gods with *rita* must therefore be old, dating back to the Aryan period, before the Indian and Iranian Aryans had separated.

Truthfulness, purity and law were accordingly ideas which played a great rôle in the ancient Aryan society, and, in accordance with the ancient Indo-European way of thinking, they were something more than ideas. They were independent entities, eternal forces.

Now we can see that there was especially one point where *Mitra*'s and *Varuna*'s influence, their power, was felt and became manifest: in all such cases where man and man, family and family met and concluded pacts and treaties, entered into solemn engagements with each other.

The German professor Lüders has shown that there were, even in the Aryan period, fixed formulas defining the evil consequences of various degrees of violating a solemn contract. It is evident that a mystic power was thought to be found behind the agreement, which could not be violated without evil consequences.

Now the French scholar Meillet has drawn attention to the

fact that the Iranian word Mithra actually means *contract, pact*, just as the Indian Mitra means *friend, friendship*, which is also a mutual engagement, a solemn pact. M. Meillet also deals with Varuna and shows that his name is derived from a base from which we find several derivatives in the Indo-European languages meaning *solemn engagement, oath, etc.* And there cannot be much doubt that Varuna is, in his origin, the occult potency in the solemn announcement of agreement to some pact, in the binding declaration of truth,—the oath or curse, a mystic and inevitable power, conceived in the shape of a person who watched over the sacrosanctity of such declarations.

In the contract and in the solemn and truthful declaration man approaches *rita*, eternal truth, itself. And *rita* is like the *mana* of the Polynesians, an irresistible power, which one can only approach with care and precaution. Mitra and Varuna are, in a certain sense, emanations of eternal *rita*. But they are both conceived in personal shape and, as we have seen, as the guardians of *rita*, who punish every assault on it. Varuna, more especially, lays the transgressor in fetters, or strikes him with dropsy.

It is evident that Mitra and Varuna had come to be considered in the likeness of powerful rulers, that their picture had been drawn under the influence of the conditions prevailing in the Aryan state. And that such is actually the case is evident from everything which we hear about them. They are described as kings, *rājan*, or as paramount rulers, *samrāj*. As such they are not, however, the leaders in war and battle, but the guardians of justice and law. It is evident that the Aryan state was not chiefly an organisation for the sake of warfare, but rather intended to be a safeguard for the interests of peaceful cultivators and traders. The institution of a paramount king, an overlord over petty *rājans* points to the existence of a state of some extent, and with a somewhat advanced organisation.

Mitra and Varuna are, as we saw, above all *ritasya gopau*, who punish the evil-doer. There are hymns in the Rigveda where the poet is tormented by the consciousness of having broken the law of *rita*, and they have been compared with the Jewish psalms as sublime expressions of heartfelt repentance of

sin. And there can be no doubt that there is, in some songs of Vasishtha, a personal ring of pain, because his sin has separated him from his friend, the powerful god. A closer analysis, however, shows that the prevailing feeling is not one of repentance and longing, but rather of fear and trembling, as one would experience them after having violated the injunctions of a king.

We therefore have before us a reflect of the state of things in the Aryan state, and not an originally religious conception.

The same is the case when we hear of the *páshas*, the fetters and cords of Varuna, the prototype of the fetters and chains with which the ordinary criminal was bound. And even the spies of Varuna and Mitra are no more than the spies which the Aryan king used in order to get informed about everything that happened in his country. We know the whole system well enough from the Kautilya and the *Mudrá-ráksasa*, and we learn from the Rigveda that it has its roots in the pre-Indian period of Aryan history.

When once the idea had become familiar that the great gods had their spies, it was natural enough that the Aryans should see the eyes of these spies in the stars, and especially in the sun, and we often hear about the latter as Mitra's or Varuna's eye, just as the spies of a human king are called his eyes. That is not however, the origin of the whole conception, but merely a natural consequence of the great gods being seen in the likeness of powerful kings.

There is an old Indian saying, which has been handed down both in Sanskrit and in Pali: *yadannah purusho bhavanti tadannás tasya devatáh*: what man eats, that also his deities eat. In other words, the human conceptions of the gods are framed after the pattern of our life on earth. This is a point of view which is exactly the opposite of what the ancient Hebrews held when they said that God created man in his own likeness. And in my opinion the Indian saying is much deeper than the Biblic sentence.

We do not know anything for certain about a personal God or a first creation. We only know the phenomenal world as it appears to us and apparently exists and has existed since time immemorial. But we know that the human mind does not only

grasp outward things and beings, but also so-called abstract ideas and notions. And in both cases we have only one proof of the existence of what we perceive : the fact that we perceive it. In Indian as in European Logic, the most conclusive proof of existence is *pratyaksha*, direct perception by means of the senses. Whether we are materialist or idealist the inner sensation remains a certain fact, which we cannot doubt. Now every fundamental religious notion is the result of an inner sensation, and from the fact that such notions are found with all human beings, we can infer that they form a necessary constituent of human nature. There they are, and we cannot tell how they have originated. They must have been there before they were perceived.

But now we know that every picture of a thing is liable to be more or less perfect. Not every camera produces photographs of exactly the same quality. Much depends on the light, and much depends on the apparatus. So, if we accept the view that religious ideas have their own existence and are reflected in the human mind, we must necessarily infer that different minds reflect them in different ways. When life is full of struggle for material aims, when man has not learned how to cope with the outward nature, his religious conceptions will be coloured by the experience of his daily life and get a grossly material stamp. As civilization increases and it is found that it is possible, by exertion and intelligence, to surmount the difficulties, the notion of force will be spiritualised and heightened.

And thus man naturally conceives his gods in accordance with the conditions of his life. At a primitive stage he thinks of them as possessed of physical strength, as powerful and even as crafty. In a civilised state, where law and order prevails under the protection of kings of recognised authority, the character of the gods necessarily changes. They become the personifications of law and justice and of moral qualities. The Indian dictum is right : man frames his gods in man's likeness.

That is what had evidently happened in the Aryan society. A certain degree of civilisation had been reached. The old belief in powers and forces was still there, but these forms were

and more chiefly characterized by physical strength. The mystic force of the solemn engagement, of truth, played a prominent rôle in the imagination of the people. A foundation had been laid on which Zarathustra could later on base his sublime conception of spiritual forces as regulating the universe: wisdom, purity and righteousness. And on the same foundation Indian thinkers later on built up their magnificent ideal of eternal truth and unchangeable reality rising above and beyond the vicissitudes of phenomenal life, the struggle for material existence and transient well-being.

Mitra and Varuna, the guardians of law and truth, are accordingly conceived in the likeness of Aryan kings, who watched over the laws and institutions and punished criminals. But even as such guardians they were themselves free, without bonds and fetters,—they were *Adityas*, proceeding from *aditi*, unfettered freedom. *Aditi* is again one of these apparently abstract terms, meaning freedom from all bonds and limits, that which nobody can fetter. It was conceived in the usual way, as a mystic force, and often viewed in a half personal form, as a kind of goddess, the mother of those who were *ádityas*, without limit in their power and activity. And at a comparatively early date *Aditi* appears in mythic interpretation as a divine mother, and the *ádityas* as her offspring.

The chief *ádityas* were Mitra and Varuna, but already in the *Rigveda* we find a whole group of deities designated in this way and invoked in not less than six hymns. In one place six such *ádityas* are named, in another their number is seven, in a third we hear of eight, and in later times there are twelve *ádityas*, who are then considered as various manifestations of the sun, the sun itself being often called *áditya*.

This is certainly a later development, and if we consider the character of the different *adityas* as apparent from their names, we arrive at a different result. There does not seem to have been any definite fixed conception about the number of the *ádityas*, nor about the names of the minor members of the group. One is called *bhága*, good fortune, lot; another *amsa*, share, part, portion; a third *daksha*, able, clever; while a fourth bears a name which we cannot explain etymologically,

viz., Aryaman. We often hear about his ways and paths, and sometimes he seems to be especially connected with marriage, while elsewhere he appears to have been considered as the typical ancestor, the chief of the *pitarah*. He may have something to do with the mystic forces which were considered to bind the members of the family together, while names such as *amsa* and *bhāga* lead us to think of common property and the shares therein allotted to the individuals. At all events there is no solar idea apparent in connection with the *ādityas*, and the theory according to which they should be the sun, the moon and the five planets has in reality no other foundation than the supposed fact that their number was originally seven.

It seems probable that the idea of grouping together certain divine forces which were of special importance for the organisation of life in the family and state, was common to the Indian and Iranian Aryans. For we find a similar group, that of the *Amesha Spentas*, in the Avesta. And here it is quite clear that we have not to do with celestial bodies like sun, moon and planets, but with psychical or psycho-physical forces and potencies,—judicial ideas and so forth,—and the case with the Vedic *ādityas* is similar. Like Mitra and Varuna they point to a certain spiritualizing of the ancient idea of force and energy, a reshaping under the influence of an advanced civilisation.

In this connection I shall not try to discuss the question whether the ideas underlying these gods have been borrowed from, or influenced by an old foreign civilisation. At all events they had become incorporated in the Aryan period, as a part of Aryan mentality. And from the view-point of the student of Indian religions, they are an Aryan inheritance, whatever their origin may be.

It is a very incomplete sketch which I have been able to give of the Indo-European and the Aryan inheritance in the religious conceptions of the Vedic Indians, and it is far less comprehensive than the picture usually drawn of Indo-European religion. But I feel convinced that it is much more reliable, and it will probably be possible to fill it in with more details in future.

The religious mentality that we can discern may be summed up as follows :

In the first, the Indo-European, stage of development, man felt his dependency on higher forces which he could not control, but which he might reasonably hope to conciliate and to utilize. Foremost in his mind were the mystical forces of life and generation, manifested before his eyes wherever new beings seemed to come into existence, or where grass and vegetation grew up. These forces were not merely theoretic entities, but some sort of substance or emanation.

But then the difference between them and living beings, *i.e.* individual men, was in his eyes not so fundamental as it is to us. The forces themselves were more or less conceived in man's likeness, though they had a much wider sphere of action. The ideas of fatherhood and motherhood were manifest in each father and mother, but they were something much greater, and might be observed wherever somebody or something comes into existence. Behind all such occurrences it was possible to observe the action of ideal fatherhood and motherhood, viewed as a great primeval couple, a great Father and a great Mother, because the Indo-European mind tended to give a personal touch even to what we would call mere abstract notions.

We seem to discern traces of an ancient worship of these forces in old ceremonies which were probably performed in order to realise them, to instigate them into activity. The primitive conception was probably of the same kind as what we find in so many places : if one wishes to produce some effect, an imitation of the desired object is made up, and this imitation is more or less the thing itself. The eternal forces are set in motion, and the machinery goes on, following its own laws. Man can see the symbol with his eyes, but behind the symbol is the eternal reality of power, all-pervading power, which once manifested in the symbol goes on acting in accordance with its own laws.

The underlying feeling is one of dependency, but when man is able to bring about the symbolical representation of eternal power, he becomes connected with this power itself, gets a share in it and is filled with a vague sense of universal law which makes himself part of a larger world and a higher realm, where the limitations of earthly existence have disappeared. The same

all-pervading forces which produce life and growth are also active within himself.

We have before us germs which in the course of time were destined to sprout in the sublime thinking of the Upanishads, but they are still undeveloped, and we are strongly impressed with the primitive nature of the underlying ideas. But then we also see in the ancient denomination of these forces as *deva*, connected with light and the sky, a tendency to raise them above the limits of worldly existence, beyond darkness and night into unlimited realms.

In the later Aryan period, we can observe how conceptions of a somewhat different kind had come into the foreground. The fundamental idea is still the same, that of independent power and might. But, in addition to the forces which produce life and make it possible, the eye is fixed on those which regulate life in human society : law and justice and the sanctity of solemn engagements. The Aryan society had reached a higher stage of development. At its head were powerful kings, whose foremost duty was to protect the established order of things, as the guardians of law and order. And this state of affairs is reflected in the belief in heavenly kings, the guardians of truth, who made man stick to his obligations and punished every transgression.

Religion had acquired a distinct social and moral turn, which had not, of course, been entirely lacking in the previous period, but which now became foremost in man's mind. The Aryan conception of royalty had led to the notion of great heavenly rulers, with a stronger personal stamp than what we can see in the earlier period. And in the characterization of these gods as issuing from *aditi*, unlimitedness, we have a germ which might be developed into the idea of an almighty god.

But the development is only in its beginning, and the old conception is still there. Mitra and Varuna are still intimately connected with the special potencies for which they stand, and in spite of their relationship to unlimited freedom, they are the guardians of *rita*, as if this very *rita*, eternal truth and reality, were a still more powerful and important thing, beyond them and above them.

Varuna's eye, and such would scarcely have been the case if one of these gods were considered to be identical with the sun. At all events, it would be very difficult to understand how the sun could be called Varuna's eye if Varuna were the moon.

Further, an analysis of the features mentioned in connection with the two great Asuras, especially in the Rigveda, seems to lead us away from sun and moon, and in quite a different direction.

There is one important word which very frequently occurs in connection with these gods,—the Sanskrit *rita*, old-Iranian *asha*, or probably more correctly *urta*. We do not know the etymology of this word. In Iranian it seems to mean *purity*, righteousness, and is invoked almost as a deity. In the Vedas, *rita* means *truth*,—that which really is and not only appears to be,—the eternal reality.

It is now of importance to note that the Iranian *Mithra* and *Ahura* are described as friends of *asha*, while the Vedic *Mitra* and *Varuna* are the guardians of *rita*,—*ritasya gopau*. The connection of the two gods with *rita* must therefore be old, dating back to the Aryan period, before the Indian and Iranian Aryans had separated.

Truthfulness, purity and law were accordingly ideas which played a great rôle in the ancient Aryan society, and, in accordance with the ancient Indo-European way of thinking, they were something more than ideas. They were independent entities, eternal forces.

Now we can see that there was especially one point where *Mitra*'s and *Varuna*'s influence, their power, was felt and became manifest: in all such cases where man and man, family and family met and concluded pacts and treaties, entered into solemn engagements with each other.

The German professor Lüders has shown that there were, even in the Aryan period, fixed formulas defining the evil consequences of various degrees of violating a solemn contract. It is evident that a mystic power was thought to be found behind the agreement, which could not be violated without evil consequences.

Now the French scholar Meillet has drawn attention to the

fact that the Iranian word Mithra actually means *contract, pact*, just as the Indian Mitra means *friend, friendship*, which is also a mutual engagement, a solemn pact. M. Meillet also deals with Varuna and shows that his name is derived from a base from which we find several derivatives in the Indo-European languages meaning *solemn engagement, oath, etc.* And there cannot be much doubt that Varuna is, in his origin, the occult potency in the solemn announcement of agreement to some pact, in the binding declaration of truth,—the oath or curse, a mystic and inevitable power, conceived in the shape of a person who watched over the sacrosanctity of such declarations.

In the contract and in the solemn and truthful declaration man approaches *rita*, eternal truth, itself. And *rita* is like the *mana* of the Polynesians, an irresistible power, which one can only approach with care and precaution. Mitra and Varuna are, in a certain sense, emanations of eternal *rita*. But they are both conceived in personal shape and, as we have seen, as the guardians of *rita*, who punish every assault on it. Varuna, more especially, lays the transgressor in fetters, or strikes him with dropsy.

It is evident that Mitra and Varuna had come to be considered in the likeness of powerful rulers, that their picture had been drawn under the influence of the conditions prevailing in the Aryan state. And that such is actually the case is evident from everything which we hear about them. They are described as kings, *rājan*, or as paramount rulers, *śamrāj*. As such they are not, however, the leaders in war and battle, but the guardians of justice and law. It is evident that the Aryan state was not chiefly an organisation for the sake of warfare, but rather intended to be a safeguard for the interests of peaceful cultivators and traders. The institution of a paramount king, an overlord over petty *rājans* points to the existence of a state of some extent, and with a somewhat advanced organisation.

Mitra and Varuna are, as we saw, above all *ritasya gopau*, who punish the evil-doer. There are hymns in the Rīgveda where the poet is tormented by the consciousness of having broken the law of *rita*, and they have been compared with the Jewish psalms as sublime expressions of heartfelt repentance of

sin. And there can be no doubt that there is, in some songs of Vasishtha, a personal ring of pain, because his sin has separated him from his friend, the powerful god. A closer analysis, however, shows that the prevailing feeling is not one of repentance and longing, but rather of fear and trembling, as one would experience them after having violated the injunctions of a king.

We therefore have before us a reflect of the state of things in the Aryan state, and not an originally religious conception.

The same is the case when we hear of the *páshas*, the fetters and cords of Varuna, the prototype of the fetters and chains with which the ordinary criminal was bound. And even the spies of Varuna and Mitra are no more than the spies which the Aryan king used in order to get informed about everything that happened in his country. We know the whole system well enough from the Kautilya and the Mudrá-ráksasa, and we learn from the Rigveda that it has its roots in the pre-Indian period of Aryan history.

When once the idea had become familiar that the great gods had their spies, it was natural enough that the Aryans should see the eyes of these spies in the stars, and especially in the sun, and we often hear about the latter as Mitra's or Varuna's eye, just as the spies of a human king are called his eyes. That is not however, the origin of the whole conception, but merely a natural consequence of the great gods being seen in the likeness of powerful kings.

There is an old Indian saying, which has been handed down both in Sanskrit and in Pali: *yadannah purusho bhavanti tadannás tasya devatáh*: what man eats, that also his deities eat. In other words, the human conceptions of the gods are framed after the pattern of our life on earth. This is a point of view which is exactly the opposite of what the ancient Hebrews held when they said that God created man in his own likeness. And in my opinion the Indian saying is much deeper than the Biblic sentence.

We do not know anything for certain about a personal God or a first creation. We only know the phenomenal world as it appears to us and apparently exists and has existed since time immemorial. But we know that the human mind does not only

grasp outward things and beings, but also so-called abstract ideas and notions. And in both cases we have only one proof of the existence of what we perceive : the fact that we perceive it. In Indian as in European Logic, the most conclusive proof of existence is *pratyaksha*, direct perception by means of the senses. Whether we are materialist or idealist the inner sensation remains a certain fact, which we cannot doubt. Now every fundamental religious notion is the result of an inner sensation, and from the fact that such notions are found with all human beings, we can infer that they form a necessary constituent of human nature. There they are, and we cannot tell how they have originated. They must have been there before they were perceived.

But now we know that every picture of a thing is liable to be more or less perfect. Not every camera produces photographs of exactly the same quality. Much depends on the light, and much depends on the apparatus. So, if we accept the view that religious ideas have their own existence and are reflected in the human mind, we must necessarily infer that different minds reflect them in different ways. When life is full of struggle for material aims, when man has not learned how to cope with the outward nature, his religious conceptions will be coloured by the experience of his daily life and get a grossly material stamp. As civilization increases and it is found that it is possible, by exertion and intelligence, to surmount the difficulties, the notion of force will be spiritualised and heightened.

And thus man naturally conceives his gods in accordance with the conditions of his life. At a primitive stage he thinks of them as possessed of physical strength, as powerful and even as crafty. In a civilised state, where law and order prevails under the protection of kings of recognised authority, the character of the gods necessarily changes. They become the personifications of law and justice and of moral qualities. The Indian dictum is right : man frames his gods in man's likeness.

That is what had evidently happened in the Aryan society. A certain degree of civilisation had been reached. The old belief in powers and forces was still there, but these forms were

and more chiefly characterized by physical strength. The mystic force of the solemn engagement, of truth, played a prominent rôle in the imagination of the people. A foundation had been laid on which Zarathustra could later on base his sublime conception of spiritual forces as regulating the universe: wisdom, purity and righteousness. And on the same foundation Indian thinkers later on built up their magnificent ideal of eternal truth and unchangeable reality rising above and beyond the vicissitudes of phenomenal life, the struggle for material existence and transient well-being.

Mitra and Varuna, the guardians of law and truth, are accordingly conceived in the likeness of Aryan kings, who watched over the laws and institutions and punished criminals. But even as such guardians they were themselves free, without bonds and fetters,—they were *Adityas*, proceeding from *aditi*, unfettered freedom. *Aditi* is again one of these apparently abstract terms, meaning freedom from all bonds and limits, that which nobody can fetter. It was conceived in the usual way, as a mystic force, and often viewed in a half personal form, as a kind of goddess, the mother of those who were *ádityas*, without limit in their power and activity. And at a comparatively early date *Aditi* appears in mythic interpretation as a divine mother, and the *ádityas* as her offspring.

The chief *ádityas* were Mitra and Varuna, but already in the *Rigveda* we find a whole group of deities designated in this way and invoked in not less than six hymns. In one place six such *ádityas* are named, in another their number is seven, in a third we hear of eight, and in later times there are twelve *ádityas*, who are then considered as various manifestations of the sun, the sun itself being often called *áditya*.

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THE SPIRIT OF HINDU LAW

By ATULCHANDRA GUPTA.

One superstition about Hindu Law, which may discourage its study, requires demolition. This is the theory that Hindu Law did not develop beyond the stage,—said to be an invariable early one in the evolution of all systems of law,—when legal rules proper are not yet distinguished from religious and moral injunctions.

This fiction was started on its effective career by Sir Henry Maine, in the sixties of the last century, in his *Ancient Law*. The book was the first work in the English language on Historical Jurisprudence and is reputed to be still the foremost in the field. But scientific interest is not the only motive which seems to have moved its author. Under the garb of scientific inquiry, his work is propaganda of European superiority of a most insidious type.

Progress, says this Anglo-Saxon jurist, is an exception in the history of human races. It is practically confined to the peoples of Western Europe. With other peoples, for instance the Orientals, stagnation is the rule. In arts and institutions of civilisation they develop up to a certain stage and then stagnate or deteriorate. Of this generalisation, which no doubt is meant to be the scientific basis and moral justification of West-European domination of the earth, Maine gives Hindu Law as an illustration. The law of this oriental people, he asserts, did not succeed in differentiating itself from moral and religious rules, and, quite in keeping with his theory, stagnated at this semi-primitive stage of amorphous homogeneity.

It seems to be remarkable with what cool assurance a professed votary of scientific study of law speaks and theorises on a system of law of which, as his annotator Sir Frederick Pollock tells us, he cared to know little beyond the names of some of the works in which that law is contained. Clearly, in dealing with an Oriental civilisation, this European scholar did not feel any very strenuous call on the honesty of his scholarship. One

cannot, it seems, be imperial in politics without being superficial in culture.

But I suspect that Maine knew something more than the names of the Dharmasāstras. He doubtless knew of Sir William Jones' translation of the Manu Samhita and in all probability passed his eyes over some of its pages. And what a medley he must have found there! Mythical cosmogony; duties of the student, of the householder and of the ascetic; rules of etiquette, of purification and penance; injunctions moral and ceremonial as to the minutest details of every day life; and side by side, rules of Austinian positive law. And Maine was told that this book was a code of Hindu Law. Contrasting this code with other codes of law known to him,—the Pandects, or the Code Napoleon,—how could he entertain any doubt that Hindu Law failed to reach the stage at which positive law is clearly distinguished from morality and religion?

I am sure Maine did not take the trouble of reading Jones' translation of Manu from cover to cover. For any one of ordinary intelligence who does this cannot fail to notice that though Manu's *Dharmasāstra* treats of moral, religious, social and legal rules, it never confuses one kind of rules with another,—the difference between the various kinds being brought out as clearly as, say, in Austin's *Province of Jurisprudence determined*, and their relation and inter-dependence in concrete life realised with infinitely greater clearness than Austin ever attained. Manu's *Dharmasāstra* is not a code of Hindu Law as the French or the German code is a code of French or German law, but it is a treatise of which such a code of Hindu Law forms a part. Maine was unconscious of the difference and was misled.

What then is a Dharmasāstra, or rather what is *Dharma* of which the Dharmasāstra is the treatise or code? For a reply we shall not have to theorise about a possible synthetic principle which might have been subconsciously working in the minds of the composers of the Dharmasāstras and led them to unite, in one treatise, topics which to some appear so very disparate. For

the ancient Hindu writers were quite conscious of this unifying principle. For instance Medhātithi, the earliest commentator of the Manu Samhitá known to us, explains that the term Dharma means 'duty' (VII, 4); it is 'used to indicate the injunctions and prohibitions as to what ought to be done and what ought to be refrained from' (I, 2). 'Dharma' thus means 'duty' in general,—duties of all kinds,—domestic, social, political, juristic and religious. The thread of unity which binds together in one code these varied duties is of course the greatest, if not the only principle of union we know, *viz.*, the synthetic unity of human personality.

Social, religious and juristic rules must not be confused with one another, but their unity also must not be overlooked. They are rules of action for the same human person in his different relations, the threads of which do not avoid each other but twine and intertwine to form the texture of civilised human life. The writers of the Dharmasāstras saw the difference as well as the unity of those rules. If any moderns fail to appreciate their view-point, they are either ignorant of the differentiation made, or oblivious of the unity realised in the Dharmasāstras.

The Dharmasāstra which goes by the name of Yājñavalkya Smṛiti makes a threefold division of the topics of discussion and divides the Code into three corresponding books or *adhyāyas*, *viz.*, Achāra, Vyāvahāra and Prāyaschitta.

The first deals with rules of domestic and social life, elaborated on the basis of a conception of society as consisting of four classes of men with different functions and of life as divided into four periods of different activity. Education, marriage, domestic life, and life ultra-domestic, when man is set free from social bonds and is alone with his spirit, are here dealt with. The domestic and social relations, however, just as with the ancient Greeks and Romans, are not confined to living men, but extend to the dead ancestors and to the gods and other spirits. Appropriate observances and rituals following from these relations are accordingly laid down. The last section of this Book deals with 'Kingly duties' (*Rāja-Dharma*) and is a chapter on statecraft and administrative law.

This section leads naturally to the second book on Vyāvahāra. It deals exclusively with positive law, law in the strict juristic sense, both substantive and procedural. The term Vyāvahāra means litigation or legal dispute. As the Mitākshara explains; "Vyāvahāra is the claim made by one for himself in opposition to the claim of another, as for example when someone asserts, 'this corn field is mine', and another also asserts in opposition to him, 'it is mine'." (Mit. II, 4). Or as the Yājñavalkya Smṛiti itself says, "The application by a person to the King, being overpowered by another in ways against law and custom, forms the subject matter of Vyāvahāra". (Yaj. II, 5). The term was also used in the more general sense of juristic act, legal transaction, act in the law. In this Book therefore no act or conduct is discussed which has no legal consequences, and no rules are laid down which are only moral or religious. Nay more, law is here conceived from the extremely practical point of view of law-courts. The King must decide disputes between his subjects. What then are the different kinds of disputes and what are the principles and rules for deciding on each kind of dispute? This is the background for discussion on law in the Dharmasāstras, and this is now the so-called eighteen heads of litigation or rather subjects of legal disputes (*astādasa vivāda padāni*) are introduced as a convenient classification for giving a statement of law in its various branches. We must resist the natural temptation of calling these heads or subjects *forms of action*, for no peculiarity of procedural form distinguishes one head from another. The principle of division is not *form of procedure* but *variety of legal relation*.

The Third Book on Prāyaschitta deals with purification and penance. Of the five sections which constitute the Book the first four logically belong to the Book on Achāra. The first section lays down rules for funeral and after-death rites and rituals, as also for purification from impurity by births and deaths of relations. The second section gives exceptions to the general rules regulating life and conduct in circumstances of difficulty. The next two sections deal with life in the last two of its four periods. It is the last section which deals with the

proper subject matter of the Book, *viz.*, Penance. The concept of penance the Hindus had in common with the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is deduced from the idea of survival after bodily death and from recognition of relations with powers which are supra-mundane. The theory on which it works is, in the words of Medhatithi, "that a lesser degree of pain voluntarily suffered here and now is calculated to avoid far greater pain hereafter, consequent on guilty conduct; just as", says the commentator, "pain of bitter medicine and of low diet avoids the pain of disease; or just as a person receives only half the punishment who himself notifies to the king his own violation of any law." (Commentary on *Manu XI*, 46).

This scheme of Yājñavalkya Smṛiti, of the tripartite division of topics, is the common scheme, more or less apparent, of all complete codes of Dharmasāstra. I speak of a complete code of Dharmasāstra, for some Smṛiti Samhitās do not deal with all the three subjects of Achāra, Vyāvahāra and Prāyaschitta, but confine themselves to one or two of them only. Many appear to have been books only on Achāra and Prayaschitta, and it is of interest to note that the well-known Nārada-smṛiti deals exclusively with Vyāvahāra or positive law, altogether omitting Achāra and Prāyaschitta.

It is perhaps unnecessary now to repeat that one would only be misled by seeking Hindu Law everywhere in the Dharmasāstras. It is to be found only in one part of those treatises, *viz.*, the part dealing with Vyāvahāra, excepting the law relating to those relationships whose social aspect is of more importance than the legal, *e.g.* marriage, which naturally forms a part of the Achāra portion of the Dharmasāstras. But it does not seem that obvious consequences of this evident fact are always kept in mind. And the result is a good deal of confusion of ideas in matters of Hindu Law even in quarters where it is to be least expected.

One such confusion relates to the subject of the sources of Hindu Law. Modern text books of Hindu Law agree in telling us that these sources according to Hindu theory are

enumerated in the text of Manu which says that "the Veda, the Smṛiti, the usage of the Good, and what is agreeable to one's own soul have been said to be the four-fold direct proofs of Dharma", (Manu, II, 12); or in the variant text of Yajñavalkya which adds to Manu's four a fifth source, *viz.*, "desire born of due deliberation" (Yaj. I, 7).

Now obviously neither 'what is agreeable to one's own soul' nor 'desire born of due deliberation', whatever they may mean, can be conceived as a source of positive law. And when, as we must, we give up the ignorant supposition that Hindu Law did not distinguish between ethico-religious and legal duties, the only way to treat these texts, as enumeration of sources of law, is by taking them as enumerating generally sources of all kinds of duties, legal and social, as well as moral and religious, that is to say of 'Dharma' in general,—of 'Vyāvahāra Dharma' as well as of Achāra and Prāyaschitta Dharmas. So that each of these sources is not necessarily a source of all kinds of Dharma, but some may be sources exclusively of one or two kinds of Dharma only. And we may say that though the Veda, the Smṛiti and the usage of the Good are sources of Law (Vyāvahāra) as well as of other duties, agreeableness to the soul and deliberate desire are sources of Achāra and Prāyaschitta only, but not of Law or Vyāvahāra.

But even this modified view of these texts as enumeration of sources of positive law seems to me to be inadequate. For the fact is that these texts were not really meant to be enumerations of the sources of Vyāvahāra or positive law, but only of Achāra, which in a broad sense includes Prāyaschitta also. The text of Manu quoted above is merely a repetition of an earlier text which says: 'the entire Veda is the source or proof of Dharma, also the memory of persons versed in the Veda and concentrated on it, as also the usage and the self-satisfaction of the good (and learned in the Veda)' (Manu II, 6). The repetition was for indicating, according to some commentators, the close of a section, *viz.*, that on sources of Dharma, in pursuance with the usual practice of writers in this respect (Medha. II, 12).

But if it is certain that according to ancient Hindu theory all other sources of Dharma enumerated in these texts rest ultimately on the authority of the Veda, it is also equally certain that, according to that theory, the positive law of Vyāvahāra, or at least a good portion of it, has *not* the Veda as its source or authority.

To appreciate this point fully, one must understand the theory of the limits of the authority of the Veda in the sphere of human activity, *viz.* that the Veda is not authority in all spheres of human acts. When an end is desirable, and it is knowable from experience and logical reasoning what acts lead to that end, the Veda is no authority for those acts. For its authority is limited to acts between which and their described consequences no empirical or logical relationship can be discerned. It is only in that super-mundane and super-rational sphere that the authority of the Veda prevails, for there no other source of knowledge is possible but the authority of the Vedas. And this theory is also clearly indicated in Medhatithi's reply to the objection that the assertion of the Veda as the source of Dharma in Manu's text is useless. For the proof that it is the source of Dharma can never rest on the authority of any texts as they themselves would then be in need of further authority. That proof must be in some reasoning which does not depend on the authority of Vedic or Smṛiti texts. Medhatithi admits the validity of the view that texts could not prove the Veda to be the source of Dharma, which must be proved by reasoning independent of texts. But he replies that Manu's text is only meant for those who are not able to follow the difficult process of reasoning involved, but have to rely on those who can and who have satisfied themselves that the reasoning is valid. And Medhatithi concludes with a remark most important for our purposes: "*There are other matters also, e.g. the Smṛiti dealing with Vyāvahāra or positive law, which rest on reason (and not on the Veda).*"

This clear statement of Medhatithi leaves no room for doubt that even in theory the ancient Hindu writers did not conceive positive law to rest on the authority of the Veda. The source of positive law is experience and logic and not the Veda,—

it is *nyáyamûla* and not *Vedamûla*. According to ancient Hindu theory the Veda is the ultimate root of what Christian Europe calls 'religion', and thus, in that theory, positive law is non-religious. It is a part of Dharma in the broad sense of duty, but it is separate from the 'religious' portion of Dharma.

To take the analogy of familiar instances, the ethical principles of the Dharmasāstra played, to some extent, the same part in Hindu positive law as did the *jus naturale* in the Roman, and *Equity* in the English system. But the effect produced seems to have been less extensive. The positive law of Vyāvahāra that we find in the eighth and ninth chapters of Manu, or in the second book of Yājñavalkya, is fundamentally the same as in the Dharmasthīya section of Kautilya. And it is difficult to doubt the correctness of Mr. K. P. Jayaswal's view that politics and positive law, Rāja-Dharma and Vyāvahāra, were not in the beginning integral parts of the Dharmasāstra, whose proper subject was Achāra including Prāyaschitta. It is later in history that Dharmasāstra made law and politics its own, and Arthasastra gradually ceased to be studied and developed as a separate science.

This is the reason why the section on Rāja-Dharma or statecraft does not quite fit into the position assigned to it in the Dharmasāstra, and the commentators have to resort to explanations to find its connecting link with the other subjects. And when these commentators try at last to hide the original source from which statecraft and positive law came into the Dharmasāstra, and to pretend that these were at all times within its scope, their explanations grow laboured indeed. Any one who reads what Visvarūpa and Vijñānesvara write in explanation of Yajñavalkya (II, 21) will realise what we mean.

Some Mimamsa writers started the doctrine that as things are necessary for the performance of all sacrifices, property in things is a religious concept and should be regulated by religious principles. Writers on Dharmasāstra repudiate this view with practical unanimity and maintain that ownership is a secular concept. It is *Loukika* (temporal) depending on usage amongst

men, and not an institution created and guided by rules ultimately derived from the Veda whose validity is not open to the test of experience and reason. As the subject throws considerable light on the general theory of the secular or non-religious character of positive law I shall summarise here Vijnanesvara's discussion in the Mitakshara. (II, 114).

Is ownership a concept known exclusively from the Sastra, or is it a concept reached through other and secular sources of knowledge? Those who maintain the former doctrine argue like this :—There are Smṛiti texts laying down the modes of acquisition of ownership. For example there is the text of Gautama which says, "A man becomes owner by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure and finding. Acceptance of gift is for the Brahmana an additional mode, conquest for the Kshatriya, and gain by labour for the Vaisya and the Sudra." If ownership were known and determined by other methods of proof such texts would be useless and without any significance.

Again if ownership were a fact of perceptual experience complaints such as 'my property has been stolen by this man' would be meaningless for the ownership would be in the thief. And moreover if such were the nature of ownership there could not have been any doubts in a matter of disputed ownership whether it belongs to this man or to the other as there is no doubt when in fact a thing is of gold that it is gold, or of silver that it is of silver. But notwithstanding these arguments ownership is in fact a matter of secular experience, for it serves secular ends and purposes like food-grains and other earthly objects. A thing known from the text of Sastra alone, like the *āhabania* fire for instance, does not serve any secular purposes. It cannot be objected that *āhabania* fire does perform temporal actions like cooking, for what performs cooking is not fire in its character as *āhabania* fire but as ordinary visible fire. It is not possible to maintain that what serves secular purposes like sale, etc., is the material object like gold whilst ownership is supersensible ; for a purpose like sale is served not by the thing but by ownership in the thing. What is not one's property will not serve his purpose like sale.

Again, ownership is a recognised institution even amongst foreigners of the border countries who have never known the rules of Sastras, for we see them practise sale and purchase.

Further, if ownership were regulated entirely by the rules of Sastra there would have been no ownership at all in things acquired by a man by modes pronounced sinful for his particular caste and his sons could not have inherited those things, as for instance when a Brahmana acquires wealth by trade and commerce or by accepting gifts from those who are unworthy. But it is because ownership is a matter of secular usage that it does exist in things acquired by sinful methods and such property is inherited. The acquired may have to perform penance, but no guilt attaches to his heirs who take ownership by inheritance. And similarly, as the rules for acquisition are meant to serve secular purposes of men, a religious sacrifice does not become invalid because performed with objects acquired in violation of the rules, but guilt attaches to the acquirer for the violation ; and hence ownership has to be recognised in things acquired in contravention of the rules.

It may not be argued that all this leads to the position that there is ownership in things got even by theft, etc., for such are not recognised amongst men as modes for acquiring ownership and the idea would be contradictory to established usage.

And the fact that there may be doubts in case of disputed ownership does not prove that ownership is not a matter of secular experience, for such doubts result from doubts as to existence of titles creating ownership.

No doubt there are texts in the Smṛiti laying down valid modes for acquiring ownership ; but it does not follow that ownership is not therefore a matter of secular usage. For there are also Smṛiti texts laying down the order of succession to the property of a deceased man ; and that is because though this order depends on recognised usage it is recited in the text for preventing mistake and confusion as there are many heirs of a man in the shape of his many relations.

I make no apology for these long extracts, for I expect that those who are interested in the question will read them with pleasure and will not fail to notice their genuine juristic ring.

But the last point made by Vijñānesvara in answer to the first argument of his opponents deserves careful notice and perhaps a little elucidation. The point of the reply is that in the Vyāvahāra, or the positive law portion of the Dharmasāstra texts, do not necessarily lay down rules of religious duty based on the Veda, but they may very well be only codified expressions

of established and recognised usage. The illustration given is interesting, *viz.*, the rules regulating inheritance. They are not religious injunctions, but statements of recognised practice amongst men. As Vijñānesvara says elsewhere: In this section (on inheritance) the texts are mostly narrations of well-recognised usage' (Mitakshara II, 118). The theory of ancient Hindu jurists therefore is clear. In the domain of positive law, dealing with the worldly ends and purposes of men, the Vedic religious principles, which are supra-sensible and extra-mundane, can have no scope. 'According to all writers', says Mitra Misra, 'the Vyāvahāra Smṛiti or positive law mostly narrates what is well-established and recognised amongst men'. (*Vīramitrodaya* by Jībananda Vidyasagar p. 534).

The fact that the Hindu position in law is essentially secular and non-religious does not mean that there is nothing in that law derived from the religious ideas of the Hindus. For, apart from the effect of the restrictive action of the ethico-religious Dharmaśāstra principles, there are undoubtedly many rules of Hindu Law which owe their origin to Hindu religion. Take the illustration of one of the worst cases. 'If a Sudra listens intentionally to a recitation of the Veda, his ears shall be filled with molten tin or lac; if he recites Vedic texts his tongue shall be cut out', enjoins Gautama. It is a rule or positive law enforcing with the power of the State what was conceived to be a religious principle.

But it is only want of discrimination which leads any one to infer from such examples that law and religion are here confused. One may as well say that a law making vaccination compulsory confuses law and medicine. Law has no ends derived from itself. It is a means for realising in a particular way some ends derived from the different interests of life; and religion is one such interest. It is true that there are limits, varying within more or less wide range, to the proper seeking to realise ends by legal means; and it may be that in a developed system of law this limit is more quickly reached for religion than in the case of other interests.

But can it be charged against mature Hindu Law that it sought to realise more religious interests by legal means than say, for example, modern English Law? It is only ignorance of both systems of law which will embolden one to an affirmative answer.

'The Sunday Observance Act' of 1677, which punishes tradesmen or others for doing or exercising "any worldly labour business or work of their ordinary callings upon the Lord's Day or part thereof (works of necessity and charity only excepted)" is still living law on the Statute Book of England. And in the year 1915 one Fairburn was convicted and fined 5s. for purchasing on a Sunday, from a refreshment house-keeper, sweets to the value of 3*d.* as it amounted to aiding and abetting the refreshment house-keeper in the exercise of his ordinary calling in contravention of the Act of 1677 [(1916) 1 K. B. 218]. In 1906 the legislature of the Dominion of Canada made it unlawful for any person on the Lord's Day "to run, conduct or convey by any mode of conveyance any excursion on which passengers are conveyed for hire and having for its principal or only object the carriage on that day of such passengers for amusement or pleasure." [(1925) A. C. 384].

In the year 1917, five learned British Judges in England's highest Court of Justice heard arguments for five days and considered judgment for three months for deciding whether a bequest to a Society whose main object was "to promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action" was not invalid according to the law of England as the object of the Society involved a denial of the tenets of Christianity. In the end, the majority of the judges found a way of upholding the gift after overruling previous decisions, but not without dissent, and that from the Lord Chancellor (Lord Finlay) himself. Said the Lord Chancellor: "It has been repeatedly laid down by the Courts that Christianity is part of the law of the land, and it is the fact that our civil polity is to a large extent based upon the Christian religion. This is notably so with regard to the law of marriage and the law affecting the family.

..... The fact that Christianity is recognised by the law as the basis to a great extent of our civil polity is quite sufficient for holding that the law will not help endeavours to undermine it." [(1917) A. C. 406]. After this pronouncement from one of England's twentieth century Lord Chancellors, for scholars of Christian Europe to feel surprised at the fancied religiosity of Hindu Law is indeed most surprising.

The serious study of Hindu Law has suffered owing to the preponderance of exclusive historical interest. One result has been to attract and confine attention to the primitive strata of Hindu Law to the neglect of the developed and the mature system. The tree has been lost sight of in the seed. A recent illustration is Professor Hopkin's chapter on Hindu Law in the new Cambridge History of India. I have space for one example only.

The Professor devotes a disproportionately large portion of his short paper to an account of Ordeals in Hindu Law. Trial by Ordeal is not a speciality of Hindu Law. It prevailed in early Hindu Law just as in other early Aryan laws. A study of the ordeals of Hindu Law is of interest to a comparative study of this primitive method of trial. But what is undoubtedly of far greater importance to the jurist is the process by which Hindu Law set at naught these primitive methods and substituted in their place the rational method of proof by witnesses and documents. But this is exactly the thing which does not interest Professor Hopkins; though he need not have travelled beyond Yājñavalkya for a clear account of this process: 'Judicial proof consists of documents, evidence of possession, and witnesses. If none of these are available, resort is to be had to proofs divine, *i.e.* ordeals.'

The Mitākshara thus brings out the meaning of this text: "It is from this text alone that one knows that in the absence of human rational proofs, ordeal is a mode of judicial proof, for the nature and validity of ordeal as proof can only be known from the texts of sastras. And therefore, where of two disputants before a court of law one has human proof and the

other resorts to ordeal or divine proof, the human proof is to be accepted." As Kātyāyana says, "if one adduces human proof and the other proof divine, the king must accept the human proof and not the divine". (Mitakshara II, 22). I shall also quote the gloss 'Subodhini': "If ordinary empirical method of proof is available it is improper to resort to the supra-sensible. The nature of ordeal and its validity as proof are known only from the Sastra, and it is thus supra-mundane and supra-sensible. And so long as empirical proof is possible there is no scope for the supra-sensible mode of proof".

This method of restricting the scope and of practically superseding a primitive traditional institution of law by classifying judicial proof into human (*mānusham*) and divine (*daivam*) is an interesting device in the development of all systems of law. It is the same method by which Roman Law first restricted and then superseded the ancient cumbrous method of conveyance, the *mancipatio*, by the classification of things into *res Mancipi* and *res nec Mancipi*. The Hindu Law got rid of the primitive religious and semi-religious elements by developing a sharp distinction between things mundane and things supra-mundane, between what is religious and what is temporal, by giving to God what is God's, but to Cæsar what is Cæsar's.

But these matters do not seem to interest a certain class of students of Hindu Law. They dive down to what is primitive and undeveloped, and stick there. They are the scholarly analogue of the Western globe-trotter whose only interests in modern India are the devil-dancer and the snake-charmer.

The spirit of Hindu Law is its essential secularism. The condemnation for its religious bias, and the veneration for its ubiquitous religiousness both thrive on ignorance.

"WITH A GRAND SCHEME IN MIND."

With a grand scheme in mind
I toil day and night,
Till something large is built at last,—
truth and illusion blended.

But my tiny hopes wait long,—the joys that are frail,—
in the vision of which mingle
Some stray notes of a song, a breath of hidden flowers,
the whisper in the shade of a familiar tree,
And a leisure brimming over with dream bubbles.

When God's will to create shook the sky
into fiery whirls,
His power, in the beginning of years,
built up its triumph in towering hills.
But His dream waited millions of barren nights,
before He smiled on His first shy flower.

RABINDRANATH

CASTE PECULIARITIES IN PRE-BRITISH BENGAL

By PANCHCOWRIE BANERJEE.

[*Last instalment of the series of notes left by the late Author.*]

The Puranic story of the *Churning of the Ocean*, read between the lines, serves to throw a curious light on the origin of the Bengali people.

Mount Mandāra, so the story goes, was cast into the sea and, with the great serpent Sêsha coiled round it as a rope, was used as a churning staff,—the *Asuras* (non-Aryans) taking their stand on the east of the mountain pulling on the snake by its head-end, assisted by the *Suras* (Aryans) on the West, pulling the tail-end. In the result, the *Suras* gained as their share the spoil yielded up by the agitated waters, consisting among other valuables of the *Sôma* plant and a pot of the nectar of immortality; while to the lot of the *Asuras* fell only the froth from the mouth of the exhausted serpent.

Mount Mandāra is to be found in the south of the district of Bhagalpore (in modern Bihar), near Bausi railway station. The villagers round about it still call the inhabitants of the region on its east as *ahiphêna*-(opium, *lit.* serpent-foam)-eating *Asuras*. These non-Aryan tribes are of yellowish complexion, addicted to opium and hemp drugs, and fish-eaters. On the West of this mountain was the limit of Aryāvarta, the territory of the old Aryan settlers. And in the *Râmâyana* as well as in the *Vishnu Purāna* we read that the mouth of the Ganges was then situate within a short distance from the junction of the Kausiki (Kosi) and Ganges rivers. Here, then, must have been the domicile of the Bengali of those days.

It seems to me that this points to the conclusion that Bengal was originally inhabited by Mongolian races who led a maritime life. They had, as I have remarked before, a civilisation of their own, distinct from that of the white-complexioned, meat-eating, *Sôma*-juice-drinking Aryans. And, as we have also noted, they never accepted the religion or social system of the

Vedic Aryans in their entirety. My reading leads me to the belief that Chárváka, the famous atheist, was of Bengal; and so of course was Kapila, the tawny sage, founder of the rationalistic Sánkhyā philosophy, whose *ásram* at the mouth of the Ganges has been successively shifted southwards, as the sea receded. The *ásram* was originally near Nalhati, between the rivers Ajay and Mourakshi; then in the vicinity of Navadwip; next at Magra-ghat, to the north of Tribeni; finally it is now at Saugor, though the sea has been subsequently thrust back still further south.

Kapila, Kanáda and Gautama were the three sages whose originality gained them special distinction in Bengal, and it was their teaching which largely moulded Hindu thought, not only in the east, but also in the west of India, preparing the ground for the advent of the Buddha. The Maháyāna branch of Buddhism was adopted in Mithila and in Bengal, and thence travelled further East to Tibet, China and Japan. The Jain cult must have spread in Bengal before that of Siddhárta, the Buddha. In the *Sahajia* literature we find refutations of the doctrines of Jainism, and in the songs of the Siddhácháryas there are references to Jain opposition. Be that as it may, Jainism has been distinctly influenced by the ideas and technology of Bengal Vaishnavism, the passive austerity of the former being largely softened by the emotionalism of the latter.

I may also refer, in passing, to the activities, now nearly forgotten, of the two notorious iconoclasts, Kálápáhár and Virûpáksha; the one a Brahmin of Upper Bengal who embraced Islam and wrought havoc with the stone images in the temples, Hindu as well as Buddhist, all over the province; the other a Tantric devotee, who acquired the reputation of being able to split any stone image of the gods, on which he cast his evil eye. Their activities gave rise to the practice, initiated by Krishnánanda Agamvágish, of worshipping clay images, that are invested with divinity for the purpose, and divested thereof immediately after, which still prevails in Bengal but nowhere else in India.

The Bengali has thus always been characterised by his independence of thought, and has time and again brought about

revolutionary disturbances in the social order sought to be imposed by the conquering Aryan.

The Vedic *varnāśrama dharma*, or hereditary caste system, was destroyed by Buddhism throughout the greater part of India. Thereafter the large-heartedness of her first Muhammadan rulers made for a great approachment between the different races and castes. The Vaishnavism founded by Chaitanya was a development of the Sahajia cult, an offshoot of Buddhism. The Tantric worship of Shakti was the outcome of the Vajrayān and Kālachakrayān sects of Mahāyāna Buddhism. And neither Vaishnavism nor Tantricism, which between them held sway over Hindu Bengal, laid any stress on caste. As a matter of fact, the ferocious caste feeling, manifested in and fostered by the doctrine of the *Survival of the Fittest*, which obtains amongst the white races of the West as against races of a different colour, never prevailed in India, nor anywhere in Asia, at any period of her history.

At, or a little before, the time of Maharaja Krishna-chandra of Navadwip (Nuddea), a reaction in favour of Brahmin predominance had set in under his influence, and this was the state of things which became crystallised for the first time into the rigid Orthodoxy since in evidence, thanks to the hard and fast legal system introduced by the British Courts, guided as they were by the Brahmin Judge-Pandits of Navadwip, Tribeni and Bhattapalli.

The system of caste, which survived after the Buddhist age up to immediately before the British domination, was based on occupation,—comprising mainly the Profession Castes as Risley has called them,—and even the Brahmin attained and held his caste by virtue of his priestly functions. In the genealogical statements which had been compiled for each and every family of note in Bengal, we find evidences of change from one caste into another, due to change of profession, or by way of penalty; and loss of caste simply meant loss of vocation. A reference to some of the social customs of the period, not yet wholly died out, may serve to make this clear.

The peculiar custom of appointing different kinds of persons to be Brahmins is noteworthy. During Chaitra, the last month

of the Bengali year, it is open to all local Hindus, men or women, irrespective of class or caste, to take up the rôle of *sannyāsins* of Shiva, in Tarakeswar as well as in other endowed temples dedicated to Shiva. These are called Vrata-Brahmins, and are invested by the Mahanta, or Chief-Priest, with the sacred thread, the ochre robe and the mendicants' staff. They observe, for that month, a rigorous asceticism, and while so doing they are accorded the rank and dignity of Brahmins.

Sitalá Brahmins and Nág Brahmins are of a similar type. These are merely experts in the art of treating small-pox and snake-bite; but as such they are the acknowledged priests of Sitalá (the goddess of Small-pox) and Manasá (goddess of snakes) and are treated as Brahmins, though not of that caste by birth. In the same class as the vrata-Brahmins may be put the priests of Dharmarāja, though their *vrata* or vow is not of a month, but lasts through all the twelve, for life. This Dharmarāja is not Yama, the Lord of Death, to whom we Hindus give that title, but was a name of the Buddha, showing the Buddhist origin of these customs. In fact, it was a settled policy with the Buddhist monarchs, perhaps with the idea of lowering the prestige of the Brahmin born, to contrive in various ways the raising of all sorts and conditions of men to the dignity of Brahminhood. It may also be of interest to note here that of the vrata-ceremonies of our women, none of them Vedic, but mostly Buddhist or Jain in origin, are performed without the intervention of any kind of Brahmin at all, the women themselves acting as the priests; as for example, in the *vratas* concerning the worship of Chandi.

Some of our proverbs are instructive in this connection. I will give two instances. *Dhánê áman*, *játê Báman*: amongst rice the *áman*, amongst castes the *Báman*. This is not intended as an eulogy of Brahmin superiority, but indicates that in the making of the Brahmin, as in the cultivation of the *áman* or winter rice (which requires careful nurture and transplantation), a great deal of trouble has to be taken. This meaning is brought out in the genealogical literature to which I have referred, especially in the MS of Edu Misra. *Ját hárálê Káyeth*: lose caste, become *Káyeth*; which again is not intended as a slur on the Kayastha, but means that the occupation of the members of

that caste being various and general,—writer, factor, agent and what not,—it could afford shelter to those who became disqualified for the membership of castes involving skill in any special craft.

There is abundant evidence to show that this caste organisation was thoroughly democratic, being simply a system of professional distinction and mutual protection, involving no idea of superiority or inferiority. Before the revival of Brahmin prestige in Nuddea, to which I have referred, no special glory attached to the priestly function, nor did such revival affect all parts of Bengal outside the territory of Maharaja Krishna-chandra. The power of outcasting was not confined to the priests,—the other castes could equally inflict social ostracism on the Brahmin.

Thus when Maharaja Nandakumar of Bhadrapur (near Rampurhat) obtained a high post under the Nawab of Murshidabad, he celebrated the occasion by a grand Durga-puja; but, instead of placing the order for his requirements with the weavers of his native village, he bespoke the more gorgeous stuffs of the Murshidabad craftsmen. A deputation of the Bhadrapur weavers waited on him, pointing out that a Puja which insultingly overlooked the just claims of his co-villagers could not find favour with the Goddess, and requesting him, not indeed to countermand the orders given to the Murshidabad weavers, but only to give some of his custom to Bhadrapur as well. In the pride of his new riches, the Maharaja turned a deaf ear to their pleading, whereupon the weavers went back, called a caste convention, and proclaimed a boycott against Nandakumar, which was not only taken up by all the weavers of West Bengal, but gradually extended to other craftsmen as well, so that it became impossible for the Maharaja to stir out of Murshidabad; for no porter, barber or washerman would render him service. Brahmin though he was, and holding one of the highest offices, Nandakumar had to come to terms, and the penalty prescribed was that he should feast all the artisans and a lakh of Brahmins as well. This gigantic feast evidently created a sensation at the time as is evidenced by the numerous verses and songs which commemorate the event.

I proceed to give a few more details, culled from different sources in the course of my random readings, about the process of buying and selling under the caste or trade-guild system then in vogue.

On the one hand, the local products had to be reserved for the local villagers, only the surplus being allowed to be sent off to the export markets; on the other, the local consumers were bound to give preference (as we have just seen in the case of Nandakumar) to local labour and craftsmanship. Nay further, each householder had his own appointed hereditary set of craftsmen and serving-men, whom he could not dismiss or supersede without assigning good reason. There also seem to have been certain restrictions to the use of articles of luxury; agriculturists and artisans, for instance, not being competent to indulge in the purchase of umbrellas or shoes; whilst gold-ornamented nether garments, such as gold-bordered *dhoties* or *sarees*, gold-worked shoes or sandals, were interdicted in the case of Brahmins and their consorts. This perhaps accounts for Benares gold-embroidered stuffs being all the rage after the removal of the embargo under the British regime.

These obligations and prohibitions were made effective by a system of registration of customers, and of purchase by passport. Every shopkeeper had a register in which the names of those entitled to custom, with their privileges and disabilities, were entered. Regular customers had to place their orders beforehand, with a deposit by way of earnest, usually in kind. Villagers who wanted to make purchases outside their own village, in larger trade centres or in places of pilgrimage, had to be provided with a passport from the local administrative authority, stating the commodities which he was permitted thus to purchase, and beyond which none would be supplied. There were recognised middlemen in these centres who introduced strange customers and had to be responsible for their identification. Emergent purchases were permitted through these middlemen on good reason being shown by the stranger for not having made the purchase in his own village. Foreign traders from Central Asia, Persia, China, had to report themselves to the local officials, get their prices passed, and undertake to abide

by these rules. Any traders supplying goods in contravention of rules were liable to be punished by the administrative authorities.

But the main sanction behind this social and economic system was the *thêko* or boycott, such as was put into operation against Maharaja Nandakumar. Of this there were different occasions and instruments.

One variety was the *Dharma-ghat* (the pot of Dharma) by which term we now-a-days translate the English word *strike*, but which in those days was an actual pot which found place in an elaborate ceremonial. The person or caste aggrieved by any breach of custom would firstly, either directly or through their headmen, call a convention of the headmen of all castes or communities of craftsmen, which assembled in the village market place, or temple courtyard, or other common meeting ground, and there the complaint would be formally lodged. Then ensued the *ghônt* (which word now means prying into other peoples' affairs) being a searching inquiry followed, in the case of an adverse finding, by a decree of boycott against the transgressor.

A priest was then called in, and a pot, called the pot of Dharmarāja, set up. Here, again, Dharmarāja refers to the Buddha; and the priest, called the Pandit, was a Brahmin *ex-officio*, but not necessarily by birth. The pot was filled with water, its mouth decorated with a fringe of mango leaves, and on its body was painted a *chakra* (the symbol of law) in vermillion. Beneath the *chakra* was written the name of the offender. In front of the pot was placed a bunch of betel leaves and some betel nuts. Dharmarāja being invoked, the assembled members were feasted. At the conclusion, each headman taking up one of the betel leaves and nuts touched the sacred pot and swore to carry out the decree of the convention by refusing supplies to the culprit.

Finally the pot was carried round, by the complaining party in procession, to each market place far and near, and the finding of the convention and its decree were proclaimed by beat of drum. This was known as the drum of Dharma, and it became impossible for the transgressor to live in any place where it had sounded, so long as the ban was not removed.

Another variety (to give a West-Bengal specimen out of several variations obtaining in different parts of the province) was the pot of Lui (the Siddháchárya). This played a part in penalising offences against sexual morality, and was in the use chiefly amongst the potter caste. The pot, smeared with vermilion, being set up amidst the caste assembly, and Lui worshipped in due form, a goat was sacrificed and the pot filled with its entrails. After the usual feasting, the offence was stated and the inquiry held. If the charge involved the woman as well as the man, the decree covered both. A day was then notified, on which the matter was proclaimed in the market place, and the pot dashed to the ground in the presence of the crowd; the scattering of its noisome contents being the symbol of the formal publication of the scandal. Thenceforth the culprits would be outcast from decent society. The phrase "breaking the pot in the market place" yet survives in the Bengali, as an equivalent of the English "washing one's dirty linen in public".

The punishment for social non-conformity or moral delinquency was not always carried to the length of a boycott. A periodic exposure of the minor cases was deemed to be a sufficient deterrent. This was effected by satirical verses or songs, composed by such of the villagers as had a talent for doggerel, holding up to scorn or ridicule any doings in the locality which offended the community's sense of decency or decorum. On the last day of the year, or on certain other carnival days, these chroniclers of scandal, in the garb of clowns, would parade the village, singing or reciting their compositions for the edification of the public and to the disgrace of the delinquents. Sometimes such parade of the clowns would be preceded by a *ghônt* (enquiry in convention) and those of the marked ones who shewed repentance in manner prescribed, were let off from such public exposure.

In the district of Maldah, the *Gambhírá*, originally a festival of the *Náthi* sect of Buddhists, is still kept up by both sexes, of the upper as well as the lower classes, as an occasion for mixed singing and dancing and the publication of scandal; and is an annual terror to the local villagers. In Calcutta, the clowns of Jeliapara, going their rounds mounted on decorated carts, are

in evidence even now on the last day of each year, and though they no longer inspire dread, large crowds are attracted to hear their humorous effusions against social foibles or modern innovations which do not commend themselves to the man in the street.

Demos in those days was very much alive, not only in its power of effective punishment, but also in the organic coherence which it took pains to maintain between the different parts of the community. It was difficult for a stranger to intrude, for he would find neither custom nor employment, and only after proper introduction and inquiry would he be allowed a place in the community. On the other hand, any grievance of the meanest member of the community would not go unheeded, not even if it was against the rich and powerful, as we have already seen. No one was permitted to neglect social duties or remain unmindful of occasions of general rejoicing. Invitations had to be sent out all round in connection with marriages and other domestic ceremonies and the non-acceptance of any such invitation entailed the rendering of satisfactory explanation.

Social censure was likewise directed against persons convicted of offences against the State; on the other hand, during the Pathan domination, the decrees of these caste conventions were recognised by the administrative authorities and had to be registered with the local Kazi, who would sometimes call a second convention to reconsider the matter. But, while the *thēko* was in force, even Muhammadan priests would not accept a boycotted person as a convert, until he had been through the prescribed purification.

The instrument of Boycott was also made use of both by Hindus and Muslims for offences against Religion or Public Policy, entailing deprivation of social intercourse as well as of religious ministrations. Certain curious consequences of this are still traceable in our latter-day society, the details of which, however, would be out of place in this connection.

ROMAIN ROLLAND ON CARL SPITTELER.

Translated by DR. KALIDAS NAG.

[This is the first part of the tribute paid by M. Romain Rolland to the octogenarian poet of German-speaking Switzerland, Carl Spitteler, recently dead. I hope to present to the Indian public very soon the second part of the profoundly appreciative study of M. Rolland. We are grateful to him for giving us a glimpse of that eternal olympus of poetry where ever-new forms of Beauty are symbolising the ever-varied aspirations of Humanity. May our soul soar above the narrow bounds of our own national literature to salute new luminaries in the firmament of Eternal Beauty.—Tr.].

The name of Carl Spitteler was made famous by a political discourse and by the Nobel Prize. It is not certain, as many people suppose, that the prize had the sanction of the Discourse. In Zurich, in 1915, the Swiss poet aged seventy publicly denounced the violation of Belgian neutrality and the politics of Germany. It required some courage : for Germany was the only country in Europe where the works of Spitteler were known and admired ; and the German Swiss were used to tackle prudently their dangerous neighbour. But courage, like genius, was natural to Spitteler. He did not attach so much importance to risks, even though large rather than small ; and once his words were spoken, he did not bother about them any more.

Others, however, bothered about him. From every side came towards his house in Luzern the homage of the Allies : articles and speeches, deputations, adulations and public *fêtes*. To the deputations of Geneva the French Academy delegated several of its members. Then one had the pleasure of witnessing the spectacle of people, who had never read a single line of Spitteler, striking their sides in order to collect a bouquet of rhetorical flowers. Present at that comedy, I could measure the ignorance of the official personages. I remember, some such official of France, who was at his wits end ; but rather than read a book of Spitteler, he opened a German Dictionary, and finding that “*spitze*” means “*point, summit*”, improvised on that theme several brilliant couplets. For the rest, the hosts of Spitteler,

the Latin-Swiss people, did not know anything either. I caught this scrap of a conversation, during the banquet of Geneva, while Spitteler was speaking :

“Have you read him?”

“No. And you?”

“Oh no! (*ironically*). First of all, poetry is too high for me, it is too far above . . . And then I don't know German. (*Interrupting himself*) Bravo! . . . ”

Spitteler had a good laugh over it. He was not in the least astonished. He was never astonished about anything. After all he had taken them by surprise. One must cry aloud before the latest celebrity!

Ten years had passed since then, and does one know Spitteler a little more? What does one know about him in France? Two or three works of second rate importance: *Conrad the Lieutenant*, that *tour de force* of a poet of thought showing that he can, if it pleases him, deal with realism: Perhaps some had read *Imago* which profits by the present vogue of Freud. But his essential work, the monument which dominates the epic poetry of our time, the *Olympian Spring*, and the *Prometheus* (two books)—giant peaks of the Alps—how many in France, or even in Switzerland, have read them? Does any one suspect that Spitteler who is just dead, is in one line with Goethe and Milton?

Three Epics—the first, *Prometheus and Epimetheus* and the third, *Prometheus der Dulder*—are the two aspects of the same engraving; the same theme rendered by different orchestras and in different styles. They are the works of a literary athlete of thirty-five, in the thick of the fight, with old fighters fighting for his victory, of which, however, he himself was not a dupe.

The central idea of the epics is the Revolt of Man, isolated, yet refusing to barter his free soul against conscience, moral official, patented, which presents itself before him, with the imperative gesture of a Master—the State as God. The suffering which he endures and the victorious combat which he wages, at the end, for the salvation of his torturers,—that same master, the God, and his delegates whose spiritual bankruptcy is self-evident, and who have no other recourse but to claim him as

their victim,—these combine to make this gigantic song of the solitary nude soul, whom mankind outrages and who saves mankind.

Olympischer Fruhling (the Olympian Spring) is, in itself, a cosmogony—like a Hindu epic—the immense unrolling of an Epoch of Nature: the new gods, the masters of the world in our age, rising from the bosom of the night to a dazzling Zenith—their plays and their struggles for the conquest of the sceptre; then the established order, the youth of Olympus, the happy plenitude! The hour of bliss is at an end; but the poet stops before the first cracking of the enchanted palace. He turns his face from the gloomy future. It is sufficient for him to have seen, from the summits, the other declivity and the abyss into which the joy of living would soon crash down. He closes his poem with the descent of Herakles, son of God, to sacrifice himself for humanity.

But the Greek names should not deceive us! Not a single one of them responds to our ideas of the school. All the myths are transfigured. Everything is new, the form as well as the idea. It is simply prodigious to have contemplated these Olympians of the Alps in new personages, and in the new scenes where Spitteler evokes them; once that is done it is no longer possible to consider that they could be otherwise than what he has created. That is the veritable fascination of genius and of beauty.

I am sure that France will be sensitive to that beauty some day. I even believe that the Latin peoples are better placed to taste it than the Germanic. For the work is eminently plastic. In it everything is seen through the eye of an artist, to the deepest thoughts. The whole thing lives, all in one body, in one individual form up to the very abstraction of spirit. It was the most sumptuous and the most fruitful work which the German genius has offered to us since the *Faust*. If I were thirty years younger, I would have given a few years of my life to translate some of the books. But hard pressed by age and my own works, I confine myself to the task of rendering my homage of respect and gratitude to him whom I admire above all the European poets of our age.

THE CLEANSER.

A free rendering, from the Bengali, of Satyendranath Datta's "Scavenger."

Why do they shun your touch, my friend,
and call you unclean
Whom cleanliness follows at every step,
making the earth and air sweet for our dwelling,
and ever luring us back from return to the wild?
You help us, like a mother her child, into freshness,
and uphold the truth, that disgust is never for man.
The holy stream of your ministry carries pollutions away
and ever remains pure.
Once Lord Shiva had saved the world from a deluge of poison
by taking it himself,
And you save it everyday from filth with the same divine sufferance.
Come friend, come my hero, give us courage
to serve man, even while bearing the brand of infamy from him.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

THE KINGDOM OF ALLAH

By MAULVI ZIAUDDIN, of *Santiniketan*.

My object in writing this is to try to explain a few things in connection with Hindu-Muslim unity, especially with regard to those elements of discord which work in the sub-conscious mind of the Moslem part of the population of India, rising now and again to the surface and causing violent explosions.

We see that opposing forces meet in nature and help to make Nature's great harmony of life. The Hindus and the Mussalmans, however contradictory their characters may be, are surely destined to meet together in peace and harmony. This is the impending divine decree which shall certainly be fulfilled. All attempts that are made to create disorder and disunion are but abuse of power and liberty of action. These create anarchy in the Kingdom of Allah, who is love,—the very principle of harmony. All efforts that tend to disunite and create confusion are misdirected. Our motherland has suffered too long owing to this tension between her sons. Mahatma Gandhi will be a prophet, indeed, if he is able to bring all this to an end.

The problem of unity had been tried with some success in 1921 and 1922. The glow of temporary peace and union had led the leaders to base their surest hopes of the independence of the country on this union. But the recent disorders have grieved us all, to the point of utter disappointment. Now, when the result of our labours has been a failure, we are bound to revise our methods. It has become quite clear that no sort of unity is safe enough to be relied upon, which is not sanctioned by both the different religions. When it is religion itself that mainly separates, neither politics nor economics can bring us together. Bonds of union formed by these are bound to break under the slightest strain.

Religion has its own politics. I do not mean, of course, that one should give up creeds immediately. That is too much to expect; though, I believe, this is what we ultimately shall have to do. But what we must give up now is the false religious

sentiment that we have purposely created out of our antagonisms to one another. For some of us feel ourselves to be Mussalmans only so long as Hindus stand opposite,—the very next moment one may be anything else. A religion built upon such basis is really the only kind of religion that most of us possess to day. Its strength is always judged in comparison with the weakness of the other. We are almost obliged to condemn the religion of the other, else we seem to be deprived of the assurance of the supremacy of our own religion. To reform this perverted religious attitude is as important a work as the propaganda of Khaddar. The work of mass education with the main object of interpreting the religion of either party should be properly taken up before we can hope for real unity. It will be only the closer understanding and acquaintance, which comes of personal touch, that will make Hindus and Mussalmans appreciate each other and so unite them in bonds of love and mutual respect.

Mere tolerance is often represented as the means to the goal of our union. Toleration is all to the good, but it is negative; it does not really unite us. It keeps us at arms length and therefore we remain apart all the same. It implies, that we should do better to go our respective ways, self-concerned, carefully avoiding each other, lest we touch that sacred irritable point in us where the clash comes. But this attitude of aloofness is at best a kind of check, and ever a persistent strain on our minds. Such toleration is sure to break down in the end, in a violent outburst of reaction, as the result of the long accumulated energy of suppressed ill-will. Indeed, it is this very explosion, owing to past restraint, from which we are suffering to-day.

What we must have is a unity of a deeper nature than a mere attitude of non-interference in regard to delicate affairs,—a deeper unity that can come from fellow-feeling, sympathy, goodwill. These can only rise out of love and reverence for one another. No mere experiment in tolerance can be expected to produce them. It is only when we have recognised one another as brothers and sisters that we can unite. Our differences must be positively justified in our mind with all sincerity. There must be full play given to these differences in the respective developments of our personalities in our literature, religion,

philosophies, arts and sciences. This expression of our differences must be welcomed out of respect for our mutual freedom as brothers and sisters. Only then can we hope for any real unity.

Religious hatred,—it is no use denying this—still underlies the surface of our minds. It is this dangerous undercurrent which is running so strong and deep. The happenings of our own day have only succeeded in strengthening it. We, who are Mussalmans, have to deepen our belief in Allah, in order to overcome these under-currents and to counteract them. Hindus must do the same with their conception of God.

We must realise that the Kingdom of Allah is the Kingdom of Love, and not of hate; and that we are all his creatures, the objects of his mercy and pity. Religion in us must strengthen that belief. It must not quicken the baser passions of prejudice and hate. Above all we must not put out of sight the humane in us, and exist only as a mass of prejudice and superstition, selfishness and greed for power. Such moral senselessness makes it easy for us to sacrifice the interests—nay the life even—of our opponent, for the sake of our own religion. Hence all discord in the world.

The problem of Khilafat is really a serious one. The intimate connection of this with temporal power appears vital to our religion. I think they stand or fall together. The Caliph is the representative on earth of the Holy Prophet and Allah. Every Mussalman is a part and parcel of this Khilafat. In order to restore that Khilafat to the Caliph, if it ever happens to fall into the hands of his enemies, a Mussalman must fight to the last drop of his blood. That is what he lives for. There is no real Swaraj for a Mussalman without the independence of the Khilafat. But, as he prefers Indian Swaraj to British rule, and also feels it to be a political necessity, he may try, on that ground, for Indian Swaraj and help the Hindus. Or if he thinks, as he really does, that Swaraj will indirectly help the Khilafat constitution and the Muslim countries on the whole, he may strive for it, having that ulterior motive in view. But Indian *Swaraj* in itself will be no victory for Islam. That will not give the Holy Quran any exclusive command over India.

We Mussalmans have to compromise and accommodate. Hindus must do likewise, and allow for this permanent fact of the Caliph in Islam. It has to be combined with the idea of Indian *Swaraj* and shown to be capable of such a combination.

Indian *Swaraj* will be of no permanence, if there is no deeper appreciation of each other, with mutual love and respect. The unity of culture which constitutes the strongest bond between the communities, can only be possible, when, along with the political necessity of Indian *Swaraj*, the Mussalmans also feel religiously one with India. That will only be attained when we have learnt how to love all Hindus as our fellow-countrymen, belonging to the same Motherland. Allah made no difference between man and man. He made all men after his own image. But perpetual differences have arisen amongst them owing to religious misunderstandings due to prejudice.

The following passages may be quoted, in support of my contention, from the Holy Quran :

For everyone of you did we appoint a law and a way. And if Allah had wished, he would have made of you a single people; but that he might try you in what he gave you. Therefore strive with one another to hasten to virtuous deeds. To Allah is the return of all you : so he will let you know that in which you disagreed.

O men, surely we have created you from a male and female, and made nations and families, that you may know one another. Surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one most pious among you. Allah is knowing and aware.

CREATION OR DESTRUCTION?

By KSHIROD-CHANDRA SEN.

Which precedes the other, creation or destruction,—first in the order of time or succession, and next in the order of value?

The man of uninstructed, undisciplined mind, enjoying traditionary reverence as the man of common sense, has no hesitation in answering the question, in both its parts, in favour of the former. He has an instinctive predilection for *creation*, and accords it subconscious precedence, first in the order of value, and then derivatively in the order of time. Creation out of nothing seems more natural to him than creation out of something; and destruction presupposes creation; for it assumes something in existence, and existence is impossible without the priority of creation. To him the process of destruction means diminishing volume, and complete destruction, disappearance of volume. He has no idea of conservation, which is a high-wrought product of advanced scientific cerebration.

He feels fully justified in his own eyes in making his answer. He probably further thinks that not to make an answer is tantamount to showing an indirect irreverence to *creation*, its *creator*, and his *creative* purpose. He is guided by instinct, not by a *priori* reasoning. As to a *posteriori* thinking, his mind is but a lumber room for the accumulation of unpolarised fragments of experience, which he has neither the power nor the desire to arrange for the purposes of syllogistic exploitation.

It is difficult to put into a nutshell the answer of the philosopher to these cardinal questions. For, there are two classes of philosophers, one of which is still immersed in poetry up to the neck, with a shower bath of science overhead.

This science deals with minute fractions of experience, subjecting them to joint and several examination, and co-ordinating numbers of them so as to build up generalisations of minor magnitude, which sometimes exact great admiration for their value in the practical life of man. The original aspiration of

philosophy to discover a complete world-view, a thing by itself, is now all but lost in the endeavour of science to build up a whole view of the world by bringing its fragments together and arranging them in such order as may enable the aggregate to be packed into the smallest space, and so appear as complete from its own point of vantage, in the endeavour to visualize the *absolute*, in the law and order of the reign of *relativity*.

The poet, on the other hand, has a free, corruscating mind, that is, a mind, seemingly in the wild state of nature, but clarified or corrupted, according to the type to which he belongs, by his imagination co-operating with the fragrance, or the stench of experience, into a blinding effulgence or melancholy gloom,—as the case may be,—with the superadded faculty of visualizing these experiences for the benefit of his neighbours. I shall say nothing of the second type of poet, for his views may sound offensively heretical. As regards the first, he flatly refuses to permit *Truth* to part company with *Beauty*, even for a twinkle, and compels it to behave like a hen-pecked husband throughout the livelong day. He jumps forward to answer the question, in both its aspects, with an enthusiastic lack of circumspection. Creation is all in all to him—the creation of jealous *Beauty* for the cajolement and caressing of *Truth*, carried to excess of love, oppressive in its sweetness. Creation comes first in the order of time, and runs through the middle to the end of it, standing first to the order of values throughout. Nothing that is not *creative* has any value for him; and nothing is creative which is not beautiful. He simply ignores destruction.

To the genuine philosopher, who, transcending the limitations of poetry and science, looks on it as an undivided whole, as an organism with a life of its own apart from the lives of its organs, the world presents itself, not as a thing, but as a process of incessant, interminable change, which he believes to be streaming in a regular, uniform, invariable sequence,—intelligible, but not always understood. For him the world is not the product of a single all-comprehensive creative fiat, or of a limited plurality of fiats, extending over six-sevenths of a week, but an infinite series of infinite changes, above the limitations of beginning and end. The change at each step implies

destruction as well as construction, which taken together constitute the progressive life of the world, changeful, yet carrying marks of identity. The constructive part of the change is coming increasingly to appropriate the name of *creation*, while the destructive part is coming to be ignored, deliberately or unconsciously. Creation, which originally meant a sudden emergence out of vacuity is now becoming, by the subtle power of *time*, an ethereal combination of vacuity and solid matter.

The philosopher is getting shy of the orthodox view of the world. For common sense, he is trying to substitute culture which, at bottom more destructive than constructive in character, disparages and destroys the achievements of common sense, while smugly posing as a creative power exploring the universe and discovering in secrets. Man craves to see Truth in *puris naturalibus*, but Truth is getting shy. He refuses to be exposed to view in complete nudity, lest we should be scandalised and take it as an outrage upon our modesty. This shyness of Truth is probably partly due to his conjugal relations with Beauty, who never allows him to come out of doors by himself, for which fact we are asked to be grateful to the magic of poetry.

Science, untouched by philosophy, is more straightforward. To it the world is abysmal at the bottom, and nebulous at the top. The middle region is the one that counts. It grapples with *where* irrespective of *whence* and *whither*. It abhors destruction, which means something passing into nothing. It loathes creation, which means nothing grown into something. It is guided by the law of conservation, for matter as well as for energy. It believes in the intercommunion between potentiality and actuality. It disbelieves any covenant or pact between *nothing* and *something*. The conservation of matter is left in the charge of Chemistry; that of energy in the province of Physics. Science hates ambiguity and camouflage, so far as it goes; but it does not go far towards the satisfaction of the intellectual hunger of human nature.

Pseudo-science is more pretentious. It is of two kinds: impossible science, such as the science of Ethics; and science in childhood, such as Anthropology. But it is difficult to distinguish between them. A science in childhood may appear

with an old head placed on young shoulders, as is the case with evolutionary Biology, and behave like a veteran military general, creating instincts and automatic movements in amateur conscripts by the force of repeated drilling. It is marvellous to contemplate the ultra-Napoleonic influence which this young prodigy of science has achieved, in the natural, social, and political world, with its bold sallies. Wherever there is life, the highest or the lowest, existing in the spirit or in the flesh, there promenades young Biology with imperial gait, robed in natural-selection, survival-of-the-fittest, and other awe-inspiring products of the sartorial art.

It now remains to examine what view Literature takes of the significance of *creation* and *destruction*, and of the problem of precedence between them. Literature has made great analytic advances during the last half a century. Undeveloped literature was general in character. It dealt with history, science, romance, drama, poetry and philosophy in lump. It was not aware of their separate existence. They have now ramified in diverse ways, each in its own appropriate direction. To make my point more clear, I may refer to the case of the animal world. The undifferentiated animalculae have no separate senses for seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting, but only one homogeneous sense-organisation, which serves them, though imperfectly, for all purposes. With the progress of life the senses have differentiated, and have become more efficient. The development of literature has pressed forward by similar processes of differentiation and integration.

Literature still has a life of its own, apart from the lives of the organs or heterogenous members which have developed out of it. This life of literature is in a perplexed, precarious, state at present. It is a fugitive, living in the refuge of magazines and periodicals, and is somewhat aggressive and intrusive in the name of freedom. Prosody is the weaver that covers its shame. It is continually transgressing its legitimate limits, and making raids into the specialised branches.

General literature, as thus defined, or rather indicated, makes a punch-like mixture with the poetic, the philosophic the scientific and the common-sense view of the origin, character

and quality of *creation* and *destruction*. We have not yet organised a science of Teleology. When the pragmatic theory of life has been further developed it will be possible to find a separate compartment for Teleology. Under present circumstances it has no choice between muteness and noisiness. It has to sing, dance, monologise and whistle in the common room, unmindful of the atmosphere of annoyance which it creates.

I may mention here the astounding fact that Teleology, though opposed to naturalism, is secretly negotiating with Darwinism an *entente cordiale* for the aggrandisement of western civilisation. Darwin himself had been unconsciously drawn into the trap laid by Teleology when he baptised his *magnum opus* as "The origin of species and survival of the *favoured* races." Herbert Spencer solemnly warned him of the danger to which "the origin of species" was exposed by coalescence with the "survival of the *favoured* races", with the result that "the survival of the fittest" was substituted. Teleology was for the moment being driven back from the salient occupied by it. But when Darwinism was brought to bear upon the Cause of the ascendancy of Western Civilisation, Teleology made a furtive, peaceful penetration and took a definite position in the theory of natural-selection; and, far from being dislodged by subsequent operations, it is making its position increasingly secure in the super-organic branch of evolution,—I mean, in the evolution of society. The "*favoured* races" have reappeared in science in the shape of the "*Nordic Aryans*". This means, in plain words, that the creative activity of the Christian God, the father of all, was motivated by the final ascendancy of the Nordic race in the world of Humanity. And this desecration of Darwinism and of Divine purpose alike, is passing for science to-day!

General literature uses the words *creation* and *creative*, *destruction* and *destructive*, promiscuously and ambiguously. Creation may mean creation out of nothing; creation by fiat, singular or plural; creation by evolution or in driblets; or mere change of form, chemical or mechanical. The general trend is to regard creation and destruction as variations in form,—useful or beautiful variations being given the appellation of creation, and hurtful or ugly ones being consigned to the dust-bin of

destruction. This opens a vast field for controversy. The conflict between the useful and the beautiful has to be grappled with in the first instance. No general *referendum* can decide the issue. The world is divided antithetically into an infinite number of correlated parts, and what is useful to the original part is by necessity hurtful to the counterpart. What is creative for the West is destructive for the East. What is creative for Germany is destructive for France. As to beauty, the determining factor is still more subjective. Dr. Tagore was recently annoyed by the prospect of a beautiful lagoon at Canton being converted into a campus. Here, in the first place, there was the conflict between beauty and utility to be taken into account; and in the second, there was the subjective difference of tastes to be tackled. Further, what is beautiful to-day may be hurtful to-morrow, and conversely.

Long- and short-run judgments regarding values are bound to differ, and even to come into mutual conflict, in a world where life is a process of incessant change affecting the emotions of diversely constituted, and still more diversely cultivated, minds. Creation and destruction almost seem to be convertible terms, the convertibility depending more upon subjective than upon objective factors. Every creation implies a destruction. To the thirsty, the variation from a mechanical mixture of oxygen and hydrogen to a chemical combination,—that is, their conversion into water,—is a creative act. To the balloonist, wanting hydrogen, it is destructive. We are shocked by the killing of a goat in our presence, and in two hours' time, when the resulting dishes are placed on the table, we change our opinion. The tailor mercilessly works with the scissors upon fine silk to-day and to-morrow produces an admirable blouse. The Editor of a periodical, pressed by limitations of space, takes in hand his redactorial sword, and runs amok amongst the contributions of youthful writers, without awareness how and where the sword-cuts tell, though nothing but malice can ascribe to him anything short of *creative* purpose!

Judgment about the creative value of the world-famed mechanical revolution, known as the French revolution, is at length getting shy after a triumphant procession lasting over a

century and a half. It has not brought the millenium which was expected from it. On the contrary, it has created overpopulation, pauperism, expatriation, slavery and moral debauchery. We feel shocked by the annihilation of the Red Indian races, and at the same time heartily admire the creation of the resplendent civilisation of America, which is one of its outstanding achievements. Destructive criticism is abominable. But what is philosophy to-day? Nine-tenths of it is divided into the destruction of previous speculation, and the remaining one-tenth is a tottering structure, which leaks before the completion report is submitted. "Culture is the criticism of life", says Mathew Arnold—whatever is useful or beautiful in life is the product of destructive criticism. The accumulation of errors in the augean stable of the world loudly calls for a Hercules to make it habitable. The very bowels of the earth have been hammered and *hara-kiried* for the creation and development of western civilization,—into hollows which may one day serve as its place of burial.

Siva, the greatest god of the Hindu Trinity, is the destroyer. The creation of democracy implies the destruction of monarchy;—the grand edifice of political freedom in the West has been built upon the skulls of kings and monarchs. The sword and the guillotine have a creative value higher than that of the ploughshare. The creation of autonomy in India implies the destruction of British domination. The reformation in Christendom meant the destruction of Popedom. Socialism comes in, and individualism goes out. The contemplative life owes its spiritual beauty to the destruction of moral activity. Culture involves the strangulation of common sense. The abolition of negro slavery was rendered possible by the prospect of enslaving free white men and women in a different way. Christian missionaries have failed among the high caste Hindus because the difficulties of the destructive portion of the work proved insurmountable. Among the aborigines of Europe and Asia the monks and missionaries have been eminently creative, because the destructive preliminary work encountered no difficulty.

Natural selection is an euphemism for natural rejection.

Nature improves the race by destroying it. Social co-operation is rendered possible by social conflict and competition. Love is often destructive. Hate is frequently creative. Western civilisation has obtained ascendancy in the world chiefly by the creative power of hate. A loves C in order to hate B with efficiency. The hate precedes the love. Hate is creative, because it creates love. This is the secret of the origin of society, and also of its progress. Friendship between individuals and alliance between nations are best explained by this theory of love and hate.

These views regarding destruction and creation have nothing to do with Cynicism, and if some of them look paradoxical there is no helping it. The truth is, man has been endeavouring for ages to distinguish between destruction and creation, hate and love, to appraise their values, and to decide the question of precedence, without advancing an inch towards the solution. It is prejudice, inherited and acquired, that creates aversion to destruction, or longing for creation. The theory of *Maya* remains unshaken by all the multitudinous stirrings for mastering the secrets of the world. Nature governs the universe very much on the principles on which India is governed by the State of Britain. She consults man, receives his opinion in the form of reports, and then pigeon-holes them ; while events majestically march through history in disciplined disorder, enthused by discordant symphonies sung by infernal cherubim from some celestial pandemonium.

ANCIENT INDIAN EDUCATION FROM THE EPICS

By DR. RADHA-KUMUD MUKHERJI.

The purely educational evidence of the Epics is very meagre in comparison with the sizes of the works or the vast quantity of sociological data they furnish. This is, of course due to the interest of the two Epics lying mainly in the realm of action and not in that of thought. The predominant part in their history is taken by the military and ruling caste. The bulk of the intellectual life of the country centred in the hermitages and homes of Rishis and Brahmins which do not receive notice in the Epics except when they are connected with the course of the story.

Nevertheless, we can wring out of even such unpromising sources interesting information bearing upon matters educational. There are some general discourses bearing on duties of the first *āśrama* of life, the life of studentship. Secondly, there are accounts of some ideal students and schools or hermitages, the centres of learning in those days. Thirdly, there are accounts given of the education that was imparted to the princes or the children of the Kshatriya caste who were meant for the military and political career.

The first period of life is that of preparation through education. But this means that we must know what it is a preparation for. The preparatory processes, the contents, and methods of education, thus varied with the ultimate ends in view. The education of the Brahmin was such as would prepare him for the duties and vocations laid down as legitimate for him. Similarly, the education of the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra, too, were such as could fit each for his respective career in life. All education was thus, in a sense, vocational or practical.

The duties of the several castes which thus determine the kind of training suitable for them are laid down in some passages of the Mahabharata. Thus [XII, 60] :

Self-control is the first duty of the Brahmanas. Study of the Vedas and patient practice of austerities are also their other duties. By practising these two, all their acts are done.

If while engaged in the observance of his own duties, without doing any unlawful act, riches come to a peaceful Brahmana endowed with knowledge, he should then marry and beget offspring and should also practise charity and perform sacrifices. He should also share the enjoyment of this wealth with the worthy.

But by Vedic study alone will a Brahmana's duties be done. Whether he does anything else or not, he will be regarded as a true Brahmana, the friend of the universe.*

Thus practically the life of a Brahmin is the life of study whereby he becomes the custodian of the nation's culture to the promotion of which he has to consecrate his whole life.

Regarding the duties of the Kshatriya it is laid down that :

He should give but not beg ; should himself celebrate sacrifices but not officiate as a priest in the sacrifices of others ; should never teach the Veda but study the same with a Brahmana teacher ; should protect his people, being always ready to kill robbers and show his mettle in battle, for there is no higher duty of a Kshatriya than checking the wicked. While gifts, study, and sacrifices bring him prosperity the Kshatriya who wishes for spiritual merit can realise it only by doing his duties as a warrior. The proper duty of a king is to defend his people and keep them to their duties and when that is done, it does not matter if he does anything else or not. The best of kings is distinguished by three attributes, viz., performance of sacrifices, knowledge of the Vedas, and victory in wars.

Regarding the Vaisya he should make gifts, study the Vedas, perform sacrifices and acquire wealth by fair means.

It is thus evident that while study is binding upon all belonging to the three twice-born castes (the majority of the population), a life of learning or an intellectual career is not prescribed for all. The Kshatriya is destined for the political and the Vaisya for the economic career. In Adam Smith's phraseology, the former is for 'defence' and the latter for 'opulence.'

*M. N. Dutt's translation is adopted for the Mahabharata passages throughout.

The status of the Sudra in this state of society has been much misunderstood. It would be irrelevant to our present purpose to go minutely into the question. We are only concerned with its educational or cultural aspects, which are very well indicated in some passages of the Mahabharata. It may be recalled that much of the intellectual life and culture of the community centred round the sacrifice which had thus a very great educative influence. The privilege of performing certain sacrifices was not denied to the Sudra. Of course these sacrifices were of a kind other than the strictly Vedic sacrifices for which the higher castes alone were eligible and are called *Pakayajnas*. But the Mahabharata is very particular in pointing out the highest of all sacrifices is open to all, including the Sudra. That sacrifice is devotion, *Sraddha-yajna*,—a sacrifice performed by the mind. “Even gods do not disdain to share the offerings of sacrifices of Sudras when performed in such spirit.”

Having now roughly indicated the legitimate careers marked out for the four castes for which they must prepare in the period of their education, we proceed to the kind and methods of education prescribed for the members of the different castes to qualify them for their respective careers or callings in life.

Regarding the education of Brahmins it is indicated in several passages which summarise the duties and rules relating to the first *āśrama* or stage of life and applicable to the three twice-born classes on the lines laid down in the Dharma Sutras.

Of the four modes of life, to live in the house of the preceptor is the first. In this mode of life one should have his soul cleansed by purity of conduct, by Vedic rites, by restraints, vows and humility. He should adore the morning and evening twilights, the sun, his own consecrated hearth and the gods. He should shake off procrastination and idleness. He should purify his soul by studying the Vedas and by attending to his preceptor's instructions. He should perform his ablutions thrice. He should lead a life of celibacy; attend to his consecrated hearth, daily go out for alms and give ungrudgingly to his preceptor the whole of what is got in alms. Carrying out willingly the behests of his preceptor, he should be ready to receive such Vedic instruction as his preceptor may give him as a favour. (XII, 191).

The following passages (XII, 242) further elaborate the rules of studentship :

While living in the preceptor's house, the Brahmacharin should seek bed after the preceptor has gone to his bed and rise therefrom before the preceptor rises from his. He should do all such acts again as a disciple or menial servant should do. Doing these he should humbly stand by his preceptor.

Having performed all acts he should study, sitting at the feet of his preceptor with anxious desire to learn. He should always behave with simplicity, avoid evil speech and take lessons only when his preceptor asks him to attend.

Having thus spent a fourth part of his life in the study of the Vedas and observance of vows and fasts and having given the preceptor his fee, the disciple should, according to the ordinance, take his leave and return home for becoming a house-holder.

Another passage (XII, 66) points out the "study of the Vedas every day, forgiveness, worship of preceptors and services rendered to one's own teacher" as securing the attainment of the object of *brahmacharya*.

The following passage [V, 44] throws further light on the system of studentship and the sacred relations obtaining between the teacher and the taught :

The father and the mother only create the body ; but the state derived from the instructions of the preceptor is sacred, undecaying, and immortal.

The preceptor is to be regarded as father and mother and must not be sinned against.

A disciple should everyday pay respects to his preceptor and engage in study with a pure mind and concentrated attention. He should never feel annoyed or angry (at the humble or hard services he is called upon to perform at his preceptor's house). This is the first step of studentship.

He who acquires learning and maintains himself by the proceeds of his begging in the morning and evening and not by depending upon the preceptor's means—such a dutiful student completes the first step of studentship.

The second step of studentship is the performance of acts desired by the preceptor at all costs even to the last penny, and

by all means—body, mind, and speech,—even unto the sacrifice of life itself.

The third step towards the fulfilment of studentship consists in the proper realisation by the pupil of the benefits his preceptor confers on him by imparting to him the knowledge which annihilates pain and brings on bliss, the peace that passeth all understanding, so that in exaltation of heart he may thus think always of his preceptor. 'By him have I been so developed.'

The fourth and last step of studentship consists in the pupil not leaving the preceptor's home without first acknowledging, by suitable presents, the debt he owes to his preceptor for his gift of knowledge. The pupil must make his presents in a spirit of humility and self-effacement, not pluming himself on making a gift to his teacher or even speaking about it, and whatever wealth the pupil acquires must thus be offered to his teacher, without reservation.

These four steps of studentship are acquired (a) in course of time, *i.e.*, by the natural growth of one's mental powers, (b) by contact with the preceptor, (c) by the pupil's own endeavours or mental capacity, and (d) by discussion with fellow-pupils. Thus the four factors of education are a suitable period of time, individual earnestness and capacity, the guidance of the teacher and the stimulus of associates in study.

The eligibility for studentship is strictly laid down. The teaching of the Vedas must not be imparted to one who has not formally become a disciple, who has not observed vows or who is of impure soul. No knowledge should be imparted to one whose character is not previously known. As pure gold is tested by heating, cutting, and rubbing so should disciples be examined with reference to their birth and qualities. There is in addition the very remarkable dictum that persons of *all the four castes* are competent to listen to discourses on Vedas or Vedic recitations [XII, 327].

Lastly, the pedagogic principle is laid down that the studies prescribed should be according to capacity, for one's knowledge is always proportionate to his understanding and diligence in study [XII, 327].

Both the general course of the narrative and the episodes or stories of the Mahabharata introduce us to ideal students, teachers, schools, and hermitages and other centres of learning.

Takshasila was a noted centre of learning. The story is told of one of its teachers named Dhaumya who had three disciples named Upamanyu, Aruni and Veda. Aruni, hailed from Panchala and was an ideal student in respect of devotion to his teacher under whose orders, in order to stop a leakage in the water course in his field, Aruni, finding every other means unavailing, threw his own body into the breach.

In the story of Kacha and Devayani, Kacha gives the following glimpse into his student life: "Carrying the burden of sacrificial wood, *kusa* grass and fuel I was coming towards the hermitage and feeling tired sat for rest under the shade of the banyan tree along with my companions, the kine under my charge," [1-76, 35, 36]. One of the traditional duties of the student was to tend his preceptor's cattle, and collect wood for fire and sacrifice and he was thereby brought into intimate touch with Nature and subjected to her own peculiar educational processes working through "silent sympathy," as Wordsworth puts it. The outdoor life and fellowship with the lower animals had also their own advantages for the student.

The story of Yavakrita [III, 135] emphasises the indispensable need of a teacher in the acquisition of knowledge which the Upanishads also insist upon. In the story, Yavakrita engaged in the severest asceticism for obtaining the knowledge of the Vedas, because he thought that study under a teacher would require a long time for the purpose. Indra admonished him saying: 'The way you have adopted is not the proper way. Go and learn the Vedas from the preceptor.' Finding his advice still going unheeded he conveyed to Yavakrita a sensible image of his folly by attempting the impossible feat of bridging the river Ganga by means of his hands.

The story of Arstisena illustrates the opposite principle. It shows how in spite of his long continued residence at his preceptor's house and regular instruction day by day he could not master any branch of learning or the Vedas. It was only

after his practice of austere penances that he achieved success [IX, 40].

The Mahabharata tells us of typical hermitages where pupils from distant parts gathered for instruction round some far-famed teacher.

The most important of such hermitages was that of the *Naimisa* forest which was like a University. The presiding personality of the place was Saunaka to whom was applied the designation of *Kulapati* sometimes defined as the preceptor of 10,000 disciples. Saunaka attracted to Naimisa a vast concourse of learned men by his performance of a twelve years' sacrifice of which the most essential *anga* or accompaniment was the discourses and disputations of learned men on religious, philosophical, and scientific topics.

The wide range and variety of their studies are also indicated. There were specialists in every branch of learning cultivated in that age : in each of the four Vedas ; in sacrificial literature and art ; in Kalpa-Sutras ; in the art of reciting the Sanhitas, in Ortheopy generally and in *Siksha* (phonetics, *Chhanda* (metrics.), *Sabda*, *Vyakarana*, and *Nirukta*. There were the philosophers well versed in *Atma-Vijnana* (Science of the Absolute), in *Brahmopasana* (worship of Brahma), in *Mokshadharma* (the way to salvation) and in *Lokayata Vaisesika*. There were Logicians knowing the principles of *Nyaya*, and of Dialectics (the art of establishing propositions, solving doubts and ascertaining conclusions). There were also specialists in the physical sciences and arts, for example experts in the art of constructing sacrificial altars of various dimensions and shapes (on the basis of a knowledge of solid Geometry) ; those who had knowledge of the properties of matter (*dravyaguna*) ; of physical processes and their results, of causes and their effects ; and zoologists having a special knowledge of monkeys and birds. It was thus a forest University where the study of every branch of learning known and developed in those days was cultivated.

Among other hermitages noticed by the Mahabharata may be mentioned those of Vasishtha and Vishvamitra [IX, 42] and that in the forest of Kamyaka on the banks of the Sarasvati [III, 183]. But a hermitage near Kuruksetra [IX, 54] deserves

special notice for the interesting fact recorded that it produced two noted women hermits. There 'leading from youth the vow of *Brahmacharyā* a Brahmin maiden was crowned with ascetic success'' and ultimately acquiring yogic powers she became a *tapas-siddha*, while another lady, the daughter not of a Brahmin but of a Kshatriya, a child not of poverty but of affluence, the daughter of a king, Sandilya by name, came to live there the life of celibacy and attained spiritual pre-eminence.

The hermitage of Vyasa was a renowned seat of learning. There "Vyasa taught the Vedas to his disciples. Those disciples were the highly blessed Sumanta, Vaisampayana, Jaimini of great wisdom and Paila of great ascetic merit." They were afterwards joined by Suka, the famous son of Vyasa [XII, 328].

Along with the stationary seats of learning in these sylvan retreats another great educative influence in the country was the occasional concourse of learned men gathered together at the courts and places of kings by the sessions of sacrifices they used to celebrate with due pomp and liberality. The Upanishads, as is well known, are full of pictures of such learned congregations which in ancient India played the principal part in the advancement and diffusion of knowledge. As may be expected, the Mahabharata does not fail to notice this important type of educational agencies which constitute such a characteristic feature in the history of Indian pedagogic theory and practice, organisation and achievement.

The whole of the Mahabharata was recited from day by day by Vaisampayana at the Sacrifice of Janamejaya, son of Parikshit, which was attended by thousands of learned Brahmins. Again, it was at the sacrifice of Saunaka at Naimisaranya that the Mahabharata was repeated by Ugrasrava Sauti. Thus the celebration of these royal sacrifices was the principal agency for the promulgation and popularisation of original literary works of national interest and importance.

The Upanishads emphasise the other feature of these learned gatherings, viz., that they provided the arena where scholars seeking to establish their intellectual position entered the list in tournaments of debate. This feature

is also noticed by the Mahabharata [III, 132-134] where it is stated how learned Brahmins were flocking to the sacrifice of Janaka "for the purpose of listening to controversies" and the recitation of the Vedas. Thither came Ashtavakra, eager to assert and establish his intellectual primacy but the entrance to the Congress was barred by the gate-keeper who under orders from the learned chief, Vandī, was to admit only 'old and learned Brahmins'. Ashtavakra had thus first to convince the gate-keeper of his eligibility for membership of that learned assembly and addressed him as follows: "(O) gate-keeper, you will to-day see me engaged in a controversial fight with all the learned men and get the better of Vandī himself in arguments." In the end Ashtavakra came out victorious, with his supremacy acknowledged by the whole assembly.

We now come to the education of the Kshatriya. Both law and legend are at one in making studentship the first stage in the life of every member of the three twice-born classes. But as has been already stated, the course of studies may be naturally assumed not to have been uniform for all the classes but determined by the ultimate ends and careers prescribed for each class. This *a priori* assumption seems to be borne out by the evidence of the Epics as a whole, though there are some passages in that evidence liable to give a contrary impression.

It is necessary at the outset to recall how the position is defined by the law-givers. The three occupations common to all the twice-born classes as stated therein are 'studying, sacrificing, and giving.' To these three occupations would be added, as special to the Brahmin, 'teaching, performing sacrifices for others, and receiving gifts,' and, as special to the Kshatriya, 'defence or protection of his people.' It is also to be noted that such study as was enjoined for the Kshatriya might make him sufficiently proficient in the Veda to be able to teach even a Brahmin student 'who should not go without education for failure of a Brahmin teacher'. Thus normally the Kshatriya was only to study, and the Brahmin to study as also to teach and perform sacrifices for others.

Let us now consider the education of the princes. The Pandus are described as "having studied *all* the Vedas and the

various Sastras or treatises on duty etc.," [I, 1, 122]. Dhritarashtra, Pandu and Vidura "brought up from their very birth by Bhishma as if they were his own sons" are described as "being purified by the ceremonies of their order, disciplined by study and the vows and practices of studentship, and emerging into manhood skilled in athletics, in the use of arms, the bow, the club, the sword and shield, in the driving of elephants; and in "studies", such as *Nitisastra* (polity), *Itihasa* and *Purana* and the truths of the Vedas and Vedangas; and are of fixed determination in all their undertakings."

Bhishma, as the guardian of the Pándu and Kuru princes committed to his care, appoints as their preceptor Drona "learned in all the Vedas," to teach them the science of arms." "Though he gave equal instruction to all, yet Arjuna became the foremost of all in agility and skill." "Arjuna took a great deal of care in worshipping the preceptor; had great devotion to his study of the science of arms. Therefore he became a great favourite of Drona." "He practised with his bow (aiming at unseen targets) even in the night." Pleased with him Drona then taught him "the art of fighting on horseback, on the elephant, on the car and on foot. He taught him the use of the club, the sword, the lance, the spear and the dart, and many other weapons, as well as how to fight with superior numbers." As regards his other pupils, Duryodhana and Bhíma specialised in the art of club-fighting, Nakula and Sahadeva in sword-fighting, Yudhisthira as a 'car-warrior', while Aswathámá excelled in the use of all arms.

The same kind of military training was also the portion of the next generation of princes. "That valiant boy, Abhimanyu (son of Arjuna) became equal to his father in counteracting the weapons hurled at him, in great lightness of hand, in fleetness of motion forward and backward and in traversing and wheeling." He "learnt from Arjuna the science of arms with its four branches and ten divisions . . . and he also became learned in the Vedas." After having studied the Vedas those princes (sons of Dṛaupadī) of excellent behaviour and vows learnt from Arjuna the use of all the weapons." [I, 223].

That the religious or Vedic knowledge which these princes

were expected to acquire was a mere smattering will be evident from the fact that in the great war we find among the active combatants a good many young knights. One of the foremost of these was Abhimanyu who is represented as only sixteen years old.

The conclusion to which this points is very well put by Hopkins: "How are we to interpret this? The science of arms required years of patient study. Is it conceivable that a boy otherwise occupied in physical training should by the age of sixteen be master of the special skill that gave him power on the battle field and at the same time have found time to commit to memory even one Vedic collection? It is clear that the law is later than the epic on this point; and even there such knowledge is only to be assumed as desirable for the warrior in general. The active young knight and busy trader must have performed their duties toward the Veda in a very perfunctory way, if at all."

In the *Rāmāyana*. [I, 80, 27 ff.] the list of subjects the King is expected to study includes Dhanurveda, Nitisāstra and the lore (*sikṣā*) of elephants and cars, besides the art of painting (*ālekhyā*), writing (*lekhyā*), jumping (*langhana*) and swimming (*plāvana*). In another passage we have mention of writing and numbers [*ib.* 80, 4] of fine arts (*gandharva vidyā*), logic (*nyāya*), and polity (*nītisāstra*).

The entire military science and art of the age seem to have been comprehended under the generic term *Dhanurveda*, the *dhanu* or bow being regarded as the type or symbol of all weapons or methods of warfare and is mentioned in different references as conveying different kinds of military knowledge or accomplishments. The *rathasikṣa* or skill with the car became a part of the Dhanurveda. Therein was also taught the skill in the use of armour so as to make it invulnerable.

According to Hopkins, "the ultimate expansion of the theory of weapons resulted in the theory of war, and this was expanded again into a theory of polity; and we thus have on the one side our modern Nītisastra or system of royal polity, and on the other the practical instruction in the use of arms or the science of weapons."

NOTES AND COMMENTS

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

[From notes taken in South America of a discourse in response to a request to the Poet to speak on Christmas morning just as he would have spoken, had he been at Santiniketan Asram, on the significance of the Christmas Anniversary.]

When you ask what idea it is that Christmas represents to me, it is as though you had suddenly brought out into the glare of the midday sun a man who for a long time had been living in a cave. Inside the cave, he had to focus his eyes to obtain all the light he could get, so that he might live his restricted life in that dark region. But outside the cave, where the perspective is widely different, where the range of vision is immense, everything appears vague and distant unless the eyesight has sufficient pliancy to adjust itself to the changed condition of its environment.

I have been living in a world of daily needs and diversions, occupied with trivialities of all kinds, which mostly concerned myself and the few other individuals who came in my way. With these scanty materials, I have had to build my watch tower for a narrow world, where a wide outlook was of no use to me. In fact it would have distracted me, and my companions also, if I had kept the mind which, like the wings of a bird that is caged, was always ready to deal with a reality that went far beyond the limits of an insulated existence.

Therefore, in such circumstances, when the mind is suddenly set free in the heart of a great subject, we are apt to grope round the external aspect and begin with a survey of historical facts.

But I must confess at once, that I do not know the historical details of Jesus Christ's life, or of his age and environment. Nor have I studied those points about his biography, upon which scholars have thrown doubts. Not only can I not deal with such a subject, but I have a temperament which ignores such things as of comparative unimportance for the special purpose that I have in view. Therefore I have to deal with my own personal experience as the background for the idea which this great day contains.

But the background of one's personal life often remains obscured, just as a misty sky does not offer a perfect view of the morning world. You know how in our own Asram at Santiniketan, we celebrate our Christmas Day, and how I offer my reverence to the personality that has to be remembered on that occasion. It is quite easy for me to do it there. It does not require much strain to switch off my mentality from our life of ordinary daily work to a region of ideals which belong to all time. We lack there that superfluous bulk of things, which exerts such an immense gravitational pull in this country. Comparatively speaking, the great masses in India still possess the simple mind and spontaneous faith that are necessary for maintaining the perfect translucence of the spiritual atmosphere. But in this country, the suggestion of the Infinite is smothered every day with the pride of wealth, the pursuit of power, and the perpetual dissipation of the spirit's inner resources, for the sake of that overwhelming outward display which is considered to be civilisation.

However, I am glad that you have asked me to talk on this day; for, because of this claim of yours, you help me to come out of my surroundings, out of the thick fog which hides the world of light from my vision.

A man may be born in a prison house and never know that it is a prison. Instead of a punishment which is too obvious, he may have his every comfort provided for him, and costly furniture and surroundings that fill his mind with pride; but he

may still be deprived of his happiness. What is this happiness? It is freedom.

The degree of this freedom is measured according to our realisation of the infinite in the outer world, or in the inner life. In a narrow room we may have as much space as is necessary for living and for the exercise of our muscles; the food may be more than sufficient, it may even be sumptuous and luxurious; yet our inborn craving for what we may call the more, the unattained, the infinite, remains unsatisfied. We are deprived of that Infinite, which is freedom of space in the outer world, and variety in the world of our experience. We are therefore deprived of the happiness which can only be had through meeting the Infinite in the world of sense.

But a more profoundly intimate perception of the Infinite lies in that intensity of our consciousness, which we can only attain when we realise some ideal of perfection. Our Upanishads have said that "in the Infinite is our happiness", that "happiness can never be in things that are small and finite". When we have made an exact adjustment of ourselves with the world of finitude, we find it is not enough for us as human beings, though it may be enough for the animals. We, in our human nature, have a hunger for truth which is immense, for something a great deal more than what we need immediately for the purposes of life. Men all through their history have been struggling to realise this truth according to the unfolding of their idea of the Infinite, and have been gradually changing their methods and planes of existence, constantly meeting failures, but never owning final defeat.

We find the animals have their evolution along the line of the race. They have their individual life which ends with their death. But even in them there is a touch of the Infinite which urges them to outlive their own life in the life of the race, accepting sufferings and sacrifice for its sake. The spirit of sacrifice in the parents is this touch of the Infinite,—the motive power which makes the race-life possible, which helps to

develop those faculties in them that will enable their descendants to find better opportunity for food and shelter.

The tree has in it the same ideal, to sacrifice itself for its progeny; but, as far as we can judge from outside, there is not in it that active mind which consciously works to this end. It is fixed to the soil, and there it has what appears to us an unconscious habit that struggles to perpetuate its existence through its progeny. But the animals, because they are not rooted in the soil, have therefore to make a constant adjustment to variable circumstances. For that adjustment, a purposeful mind is necessary, and the light of intellect, which has been given to them, helps them on their journey to race perpetuation.

Men also have this light. Through the intellect, they also try to get better and better opportunity for themselves and for future generations. Furthermore, the social qualities which they possess also help them to promote the well-being of future generations. Like the wolves which hunt in packs, and still more like the bees which live for the hive, human beings, in order to live a powerful life and to give the boon of a successful life to their descendants, mutilate a large number of individuals and compel them to live imperfect lives as soliders, or as money-makers. This desire,—that their progeny may enjoy a power which can be bought by money, the power to have slaves working for them,—is the same instinct as that of the animals.

But in human beings has been further evolved a sense of the Infinite which goes far beyond the race for physical life, that merely occupies extended time and extended space. Man has realised that a life of perfection is not merely a life of extension, but one which has its enjoyment of the beautiful. His life has become quite different from that of the pack and that which works for the hive. It alone appears to be conscious of the sublimity of goodness.

After we evolved this sense of the beautiful, of the good, of something that we call truth,—which is deeper and greater than any number of facts,—we have come into an altogether different atmosphere from that wherein the animals and trees have their

realisation. But we have come into this higher realm only very lately.

Ages and ages have passed, dominated by the life of what we call the self, which is intent upon seeking food and shelter and upon the perpetuation of the race. This latter existence is really the existence of death; for death is its natural and complete termination. But there is a mysterious region, which does not entirely acknowledge its loyalty to physical claims. Its mystery is constantly troubling us and we have not become fully at ease in this region. We call it *spiritual*. That word is vague, only because we have not yet been able to realise its meaning completely.

We are groping in the dark, and as yet we are ignorant of the complete truth which is at the centre of this world. Nevertheless, through the dim light, which reaches us across the barriers of our physical existence, we seem to have a stronger faith in this spiritual life than in the physical. For even those who do not believe in the truth which we cannot define, but call by the name of *spirit*, are obliged to behave as though they did believe and thought it true, or, at any rate, truer than the world which is evident to our senses. And so even they, very often, are willing to accept death,—which is a termination of this physical life,—in the cause of the true, the good and the beautiful.

If this truth, beauty and goodness are worth the final sacrifice, which for us is life, then they must have some objective foundation. They cannot be a mere product of our imagination, a sort of make-believe idea. This immense force of truth, beauty, and goodness, which is exercising its influence upon the human world, must be acknowledged and we must try to know its character. Just as, when we discover some great fundamental law of this material world, a new vista of knowledge and power is at once opened out to us, whereby we may attain greater freedom in this material world and make a more perfect adjustment of our life to our surroundings in this

universe, in the same manner, when men discover some great principle of the spiritual world, at once there opens out before them the vista of the life of perfection. It gives them the power to live fully in the world which we call the spiritual world.

We know that primitive men dimly believed in some universal power which guided their destiny. But this power had in it no principle either of the good, or of the beautiful. It merely represented unlimited energy, from which we could derive benefit, if only we could discover how to communicate with it. It had in it no power of beneficence, but was an active principle of will, which did good or bad merely by chance or whim, as our earthly lords used to do in former times, and may still do even now. This was an hypothesis, like any scientific hypothesis, and it did help them to some extent. It enabled them to curb their own desires and to put a limit upon lives of unbridled licence, because they were afraid of a higher power. That setting up of the system of control was itself something quite different from what the animals possessed; but it was a bypath that did not lead them very far. It was antagonistic to that which was highest in man, so that his deities became more evil in their violence than he himself naturally was. For, this sight of power, which could inflict pain with impunity upon others, had a terrible fascination for primitive man.

The society that was evolved through this primitive idea of religion was never a great society. But evolution did not stop there. I need not here go into details as to the course that evolution took in the realm of the spirit. What we have to think of to-day, on Christmas Day, is the fact of the personality of this great Master, who has given us a creative idea, opening out before our vision a new vista of truth.

Let me now try to be more definite about the spiritual world.

I am not a scientist, but I believe this material world is built of light; that matter, in its ultimate stage, is Light. Any-

how, the material world has for its source *movement*,—which is the same as light. The sun, the stars,—they are the keepers, the reservoir, of that which gives the planets the inspiration to move and to be moulded into a variety of things. This movement is the response to Light of the light that lives within the boundary of form.

But we know that this world of beauty, goodness and truth has other qualities besides those of matter. I am inclined to call this the world of personality. For it is the personal man, who is conscious of truth, beauty and goodness. Not only is he conscious of them, but his personality is strengthened and enriched through a realisation of all that is true, good and beautiful. This world of personality must also have its eternal foundation, just as the material world has for its foundation, light. And it is almost a truism to say, that the fundamental light of this world of personality is Love.

The most intense consciousness of our own personality comes to us through Love, through a realisation of unity with others, which illumines our hearts with a radiance of joy. The greatest masters in the West, as in the East, had their spiritual vision fully developed, and thus were able to realise this infinite world of personality bathed in the light of eternal Love. For Love is the principle of the spiritual world, the principle of unity, which in India has been considered to be the character of the Infinite, and termed *Advaitam*.

The realisation of this principle of unity gives us the power which leads to our fulfilment in the spiritual world. Christ through his own intimate realisation of this Love, made it easy for us who believe in him to have faith in it, and, through that faith, to lead a true life in the inner world which he calls the Kingdom of Heaven.

He it was who placed the utmost emphasis upon the idea of the Fatherhood of God. That is, in this infinite world of personality, which is a spiritual world, he realised the supremacy of the personal Being, as Our Father,—a supreme

Being, who is not alien to us, but whose nature is our own. So our relationship with this Being is not what our primitive ancestors believed it to be,—that of master and slave. They never had any intimacy of spiritual ties. Their relationship with God, being merely an external fact, carried with it the element of fear and of abject humiliation. It was devoid of that freedom which can only be gained in love. Christ preached of freedom when he preached that a father's love was the supreme truth for human beings.

In our country the Vaishnavas have their own idea of that love which rules the spiritual life. For them the highest idea of love is that which is represented in the love between man and woman. Love is intense there also, for through our differences we are constantly realising an intimacy of unity, a unity which represents an equal independence of love on both sides, a unity which gives us a dignity that is of immense value to God himself and offers us the highest right to be. All this is true, and yet there is something lacking in this relationship, namely the complete ethical element.

But if we acknowledge our relationship of father and son to be true, then we must acknowledge our moral responsibility to our fellow beings, who thereby become our brothers. To acknowledge a father has no meaning at all, if we do not recognise his children. Father and child are the two poles of a truth which is indivisible.

We find that, of all religions, Christianity has developed most strongly this moral significance of spiritual truth. So, through the personality and teaching of Christ, this recognition of the principle of Love, as the centre of our spiritual life, has been made concrete, through love's service in the human world. Our duty towards those who are children with us of the One Father is a part of it. We can never ignore it, if we want to be perfect. The love between the Infinite Soul and the individual soul has for its content love for all human beings. This has

been a vital truth which the Master preached, not through words, but through his life and death.

This truth is more needed to-day than at any other time. By an irony of fate, those who call themselves disciples of Christ have become the worst sinners in creating divisions of race, and in building walls of pride and exclusiveness. They have deliberately cultivated the spirit of contempt and hatred for those who differ from themselves. In fact, they have made use even of the Christian religion of love to indulge in their sectarian pride. This makes it difficult for them to feel a genuine love for those who have different forms of religion.

If they had never been given an ideal, and had lived accordingly, it would have been less heinous for them to adopt the lower life of self-aggrandisement. But to acknowledge truth and be traitor to it, is the worst sin of all. This treason can never be excused, and we now feel that the so-called Christian world is going through a career of calamity, which may end in its destruction, because of this enormous burden of treason against truth, wherein it has been indulging with the spirit of pride and defiance. It has acknowledged the law of matter for the sake of gaining power, but not the responsibility of the spirit for the fulfilment of Life.

Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.

Man truly reveals himself through his gift, and the best gift that Chittaranjan has left for his countrymen is not any particular political or social programme, but the creative force of a great aspiration that has taken a deathless form in the sacrifice which his life represented.

Rabindranath Tagore

There are sufferings about which the question comes to our mind whether we deserve them. We must frankly acknowledge that explanations are not offered to us. So it does not help us in the least to complain, let us rather be worthy of the challenge thrown to us by them. That we have been wounded is a fact which can be ignored, but that we have been brave is a truth of the highest importance. For the former belongs to the outer world of cause and effect, while the latter belongs to the world of spirit.

—Rabindranath.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN.

I

The late Principal S. K. Rudra.

News has just reached us on going to press of the death of Principal S. K. Rudra after a long and painful illness at Solon in the Simla Hills. He had been suffering for two years past from an incurable disease, but the end came unexpectedly. Principal Rudra was one of the early supporters of Visva-bharati and was nominated by the Founder-President, Rabindranath Tagore, as a member of the Samsad (Governing Body) among the names on the first list in the original Schedule. He was a well-known figure in the Asram where he stayed as a welcome guest on many occasions. On certain visits, in the earlier days, he took classes in the school to the great delight of the boys; and more than once delivered sermons in the *Mandir* and helped the Asram in other ways. He was always devoted to the ideals of the Founder, and his loss will be felt by every member of the Governing Body and the Teachers and by others in the Asram who knew him. In our next number we hope to have a memorial article about him from our Vice-President, C. F. Andrews, who was his closest friend.

II

Rabindranath's Last Tour.

Interview by the Free Press of India.

Q: May I request you to enlighten me as to the object of your recent Continental tour, the cause of its abrupt termination and your future plans.

A.: This tour could not be completed owing to my illness. I had undertaken it in response to an invitation that came from Peru, when I was in Japan. I was invited to join the centenary celebrations of the Independence of South America. I had long entertained a desire to visit South America and compare that continent with North America. These two countries represent different types of races and culture. South America is Latin in its stock and culture while North America is Anglo-Saxon. My idea was to see what was the difference in the mentality of

the people. So I accepted with pleasure the invitation to go to Peru. It was an agreeable surprise to me to learn, by the very fact of the invitation, that I was not only not unknown in that distant part of the world, but sufficiently known to make my presence on a national occasion desirable. I went first to Europe, where I stayed for about a week, and then sailed for my destination. I fell ill during the sea voyage.

At Buenos Aires.

When we landed at Buenos Aires in the Argentine, I had to consult a doctor who advised me not to take the risk of a journey to Peru in my state of health. The people of Buenos Aires were very kind to me. A special house was given to me in a delightful spot on the bank of a great river. I stayed there for nearly six weeks, but never had an opportunity to appear before the public or to lecture. In spite of my enforced seclusion, the people of Buenos Aires continued to show their sustained interest in me. They came to me at all hours in groups just for a sight of me and a brief conversation, if possible. I was assured by all of them that, although I was not able to satisfy their desire to take part in public functions or lecture to them, they considered it a pleasure and a privilege to have me in their midst.

In Italy.

I then left for Italy hoping that the sea voyage might improve my health. My first sojourn in Italy on this occasion was made at Milan. The reception that was given to me was most cordial and enthusiastic. The kindness I received at their hands was touching. Italy holds a great fascination for me. I always remember the fact of a number of poets from other lands having made Italy their second home. I also wanted to join the list, as the poets that preceded me had done, and derive inspiration from Italy. I promised the people of Milan to return to their midst as soon as I was better. I have now decided, health permitting, to go again to Italy and spend some months at some beautiful spot where I can rest in the inspiring beauty of natural scenery and come into touch with the living minds of the West.

His work in the West.

Q. : Can you enlighten me as to the particular aspect of your work or teaching that appealed especially to the West?

A. : It is difficult to answer. I take it that the interest of the West in me is not confined to any part of my work. but extends to all my activities as educationist, poet and religious thinker. First I found it difficult to believe that people in South America would be acquainted with my work. Afterwards I learnt that they had read my works in Spanish translations and that they had a real admiration for them. It was a revelation to me to find that a large number of South Americans, who were on board the steamer on which I was travelling and were bound for their home, were carrying many of my books along with them. It gave me the feeling that I had won my place in their hearts. I had the same experience at Milan also.

✓ *Cultural Unity.*

Q. : Can you explain to me more fully the purpose and method of your mission of cultural unity?

A. : My idea is to establish contact with the whole world. In my view, India should not remain in utter obscurity. We should be able to take our part in helping the world in her present situation and occupy an honoured place in the reconstruction of civilization. I also know that the West is eager to know the East and specially India and to seek help from the store of wisdom which has come to us from ancient times. It is our duty in India to fulfil these expectations. I hope the movement of Visva-bharati will help to bring India out from her spiritual and intellectual segregation into contact with the West. This is the one service I can render to my Motherland. We have to know that in the modern age the problems of each country are parts of the world-problem. No country to-day can live segregated. And until we Indians find our true place in this greater world we shall remain obscure and neglected, and there will be no chance of our real civilization asserting itself in our own life or making its contribution to the world progress.

Q. : How do you propose to achieve your object?

A. : Since I have been able to win a place in the heart of the world outside India, I feel a responsibility born of this special position. I want to take advantage of this and open a channel of communication that would link India with other countries. India should be linked both with the East and the West. It is for that purpose that I travelled to China and Japan. As a result of my visit to those far Eastern countries, something has been accomplished towards the fulfilment of this object. I have also been

seeking to attempt a similar contact with the Western countries, and my contention is that if I succeed in however meagre a measure, I shall have done something which would not be without permanent results.

East and West.

Q.: Do you think that your hopes of cultural unity are shared by your countrymen?

A.: I do not know. I have poured out my life and never spared myself. Everything both moral and material which was in my power to give in the service of my country has been given. Now I aspire to complete the cycle both individually and as a son of India. Like my namesake (*Ravi*, the Sun) I had my rise in the East and the cycle has to be completed by my life and work in the West. It is my hope that in the latter end of my days I shall be able to comprehend the Western countries and that such comprehension may fit in with my own mission in life.

Q.: Do you think that in any scheme of life the West and the East, with their seemingly conflicting interests and cultures, can fit in harmoniously with each other?

A.: Yes, I think they can. When geographical boundaries were real, the different peoples developed unity among themselves. Those people who formed such bond of unity came to be great. They were great in their literature, science and arts. Those who fought against such unity, sooner or later perished and went down in the scale of civilization. Conditions have now changed. It is no longer individuals who have met together within geographical limits. Different human races have come together, closer than ever before, owing to easier communication, and this nearness must be developed into a living and real fellowship. Until all the races of the world become fully conscious of their unity—the unity of interests and culture—there can be no lasting peace. The fulfilment of the mission of world unity depends upon the realisation of this great truth by mankind.

The Poet's last gift.

Through Visva-bharati I endeavour to give expression to the truth of the indivisible entity of the human race. This institution is going to be my last gift to my country. I hope it will be accepted. I also hope India may have reason to be proud of the fact that this message of world-unity first took shape on her soil. It is this expression of truth and nothing

more, the expression of faith in the ideal of human oneness and the divinity in man, that Visva-bharati seeks to achieve. This is also the Truth which the great utterances of our Upanishads preach and it is the special spiritual mission of India to give expression to this Truth by precept and practice and to secure its acceptance by the whole world. This is the voice of India and the voice of Truth.

"Action is thy care."

Q. : Do you not think that your efforts are premature and you are attempting the impossible?

A. : Does not the Gita warn us : "Action is thy care, not the fruits thereof."

It is the effort that counts and not the result. I do not know whether my efforts will have any effect, nor do I seek to know. I know it is the truth and I know that Truth has to be asserted against all contradictions. Only Action is our duty,—not the greed of Results. I know that it can be said that my message has not been fully accepted by my country. Not that I have not struggled for the co-operation of my countrymen in my work. I have sought acceptance of my work at their hands. But I have not so far fully succeeded in enlisting their active support. This does not discourage me. The fact that the vision of Truth has been seen and testimony has been borne to it even by a few seekers after truth, is enough for me.

India's Segregation.

Q. : Do you not recognize that the practical difficulties in the way of India accepting your message are great, specially in view of the complications arising from her political subjection?

A. : Yes. I do recognise that the difficulties in the way of our countrymen accepting the message of world-unity are very great. But what counts is not the difficulty. In any great cause, there are bound to be seemingly insurmountable obstacles. What I deplore is, not so much the lack of progress and practical achievement in the direction of the ideal as the inertia and apathy even to visualize the possibilities of such an ideal. India is suffering from the effects of segregation. It seems exceedingly difficult for us to see things in their proper perspective. We have no right background, against which to place our own experiences in the different

departments of life. It is this that makes our national values and efforts so petty and futile as to shut out all possibilities of our spiritual expansion. The process of enlightenment is so difficult in this country owing to our poverty of mind. We do not lack in intelligence. We are spiritual by temperament and race, and there can be no excuse for the utilitarian tendency of our national life. I do recognize that our system of education, the system of administration, and a number of extraneous causes, have all contributed to our degeneracy. I do not blame our people, but I do feel that we have lost and continue to lose faith in ideals and are becoming more and more utilitarian and materialistic, I would even say, more materialistic than the West.

Our Materialism.

Q. : Do you really maintain that we are more materialistic than the West?

A. : Yes, in the broad sense of the term. What is materialism, if it is not the formalism that dominates our religion? The belief that external observances have spiritual meanings, is that not a materialistic view? Is it not materialistic to believe that sin can be washed away by water, or dust from people's feet? The fact is, our country comprises a multitude of races in various stages of development acting and inter-acting on each other, until our average standard has gone down.

India's Handicap.

Further, we have a mill-stone round our neck,—the complex social organism which came by its existence purely as a device to regulate the inter-relationship of different groups of our people at varying stages of development. This has now taken root as a part of religion and imparted sanctity even to our dividing castes. The continuance of our old social organism, after it had ceased to have any meaning or purpose has helped to raise walls around us, to perpetuate our differences and to offer permanent obstacles to our inherent natural tendency to unite. The artificial barriers which divide us can be overcome only if we cultivate the will to overcome them ; for these artificial barriers, can have no permanence except with our concurrence and complicity. Our real difficulty is the mixing up of the fact of these barriers with the religious conception that they are rightly there, that they had always been and always must be there. I cannot think

of a greater anachronism than the belief, deliberately cultivated in the name of religion, that, from the beginning of beginnings, the Lord of all creation has instituted our differences as an abiding factor, which no course of evolution can change. This handicap is peculiar to our country.

III.

Mr. Andrews' Address at Sylhet Students' Conference.

The moment the invitation came to me to address the students of the Surma Valley, I was very eager to accept it, because I have the pleasantest memories of the gathering at Nowgong when I presided over the Assam Student's Conference more than a year ago. I have also a very deep and abiding affection for the Assamese people and a realisation of the great future which lies before those who inhabit these two beautiful valleys. Furthermore, for a long time past, I have been very deeply engaged in the Opium Question which has affected the Assamese race more than any other race in India and which even at the present time is creating untold misery in the Northern Valley of Assam. True your own district is only slightly contaminated as yet by the opium habit, yet when a neighbouring house is burning all the houses round it are in danger, and when the opium habit has lighted the fire close to your own borders it is only common sense and common prudence on your part to do your utmost to avoid any further conflagration. But not merely does common sense dictate such a policy. Far more than this, the love of humanity and the desire to do good to your fellow beings who have fallen into great misery owing to the opium habit, should spur you on to take every step possible to rescue them in their distress and by helping them to help also yourselves.

One further reason has brought me eagerly to accept your own invitation to address you on this occasion as President. As you all know, I have been very deeply interested all my life in labour questions. Indeed, I have studied them in every part of the world, and with the utmost possible care. This I have done, not from the point of view of labour alone but also from the point of view of capital, realising as I do that in the mutual harmony of both interests lies the greatest incentive to progress and the greatest happiness for the poor.

Furthermore the whole question of recruiting labour has engaged my most serious attention for a period of nearly 13 years, and I have been

obliged to go to such distant places as South Africa, Fiji, and Malaya in order to find out how far the system of recruiting has been successful and how far it has been a failure. For this and many other reasons it has been my earnest desire to make a study of the conditions of labour in the tea gardens of Assam and I hope that it may be possible for me to do this in some measure before I leave.

It is not, however, primarily concerning those things that I wish to speak to you on the present occasion ; for you yourselves, who meet me here, are young students, and your work for the welfare of your fellowmen, whether social or political lies rather in the future when you are grown to full manhood, than in the present when you are learning those habits and experiences which may lead to a valuable and self-denying life in the future. What you yourselves especially wish to hear from me at this Conference is the way in which you may build up your own lives from the very first, on such a solid foundation of goodness and unselfishness that they may be a help and a blessing to your country and to humanity in the days to come. You have to fashion inwardly your characters and to get now the inspiration which shall keep you firm and strong in will and purpose for your work of the future. You have to gain within your souls that vital fire of religion, which shall never die out, but always keep burning, night and day, throughout the rest of your lives. You have to learn so to concentrate your minds on the object that you may accomplish useful and effective work instead of merely dissipating your energies in a thousand useless ways. You have to become 'one pointed' in all your energies and occupations, so that when your lives are over men may be able to say that you have done nobly and well and have truly helped humanity.

What then, is the secret of life? What is the spiritual power which can give you this concentration of purpose. What is the "Shakti" which shall create within a living force that can never die but will remain immortal even beyond the day when your body dies. This is the one question, which I want to discuss with you this afternoon and if I can give you that secret, then it will be worth all the rest of our work at this conference put together. I shall feel that I have done something for you, which may abide as a blessing both to yourselves and to humanity for many long years to come.

I have called it a secret ; but what I am going to tell you this afternoon is really the simplest thing in the world, which has been understood

instinctively by simple people all the world over, whenever and wherever men are unselfish and eager to devote their lives for the good of others.

When I was quite young, I was told by my mother the Golden Rule of life, to 'love my God with all my heart and soul and to love my neighbour as myself.' She used to impress upon me that this was the whole duty of man, and that all the years of my own life would not be too long to seek to fulfil it. When I grew older, I used to puzzle over the last part of the Golden Rule, and I had never fully understood it until I came out to India. For I used to ask myself; 'How can one love another person just in the same way that one loves one's own self? I used to take the phrase 'as myself' to mean to love other people "like" myself; and taking the word in that sense, I could not feel that this was quite strong enough. For instance, my own mother loved me evidently "more" than she loved herself. Was that extravagant love of my mother for me, her child, wrong? Was it a breach of the Golden Rule? Ought she to draw a line somewhere in the extravagance of her love? Somehow, this idea of limited love used to vex me, and I had an unquiet feeling about this quantitative stand-point of love. But when I came out to India, the truth was suddenly revealed to me through the Upanishads, that I did not know truly the meaning of the original passage in my own scriptures. The true meaning was this: That I should love my neighbour as myself, because he truly 'was' myself. There was, therefore, no mere limited measure of love, no mere likeness between him and me, but "identity." I found this all worked out most beautifully in Swami Vivekananda's writings. He said: "the One Divine Spirit is the same Spirit, who dwells in each one of us, and is in very truth the Self in each of us" "Do you see," he asked, "that beggar there? He is God manifest in the flesh: he is the same Spirit, essentially that is in you and me and God. When you love him, you love God; and when you serve him, you serve God; and through serving God in him, you realise not only God in him, but God in your own self. For the God in you is Advaitam, the Undivided, the One without the second. God is in him. God is in you.

Thus my neighbour is myself. There is no barrier at all: He and I are one. It was Christ who said: "I and my Father are one." He also prayed for his disciples, that they might be one in him as he was one with his father. Here it is all identity. This is the vital truth of love and the secret of all service to humanity. If we stand above any one as a superior and patronise him, then that service is useless. If we stand out-

side him, and think of ourselves as like him, then that service does not go far enough. If, however, we identify ourselves with the lowliest of our brethren, suffering when they suffer and rejoicing when they rejoice, then our service is perfect.

I heard only recently a very beautiful story about the saint Ramkrishna Paramahansa, how when he had realised this supreme truth of the Advaitam, and wished to carry it out in action, he used to go out at night time and do the sweepers' work in the neighbouring places, removing the very filthiest things and the most repulsive, in order that he might truly identify himself with the sweeper and not merely talk about unity. The true Christian service is of the same character. Christ said: "If any one gives a cup of water in my name, he shall be blessed." And again he said: "I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me water to drink; inasmuch as you did it to one of the very lowest of my brethren, you did it unto me." Here again the identity is so absolute that the starving man, the thirsting man is Christ; the man to whom a cup of water is given is Christ. Christ does not here talk about loving any one in a limited way. He absolutely identifies himself with the lowliest and the lost, and then asks for our love.

Now you have learnt from me the secret I wanted to tell you. If you can realize this unity, if you can understand this doctrine of practical Vedanta,—that, which the Sufis call the Unity and the Christians call the indwelling Christ, then you will find a wonderful spiritual power, a wonderful Shakti which will transform your whole life. You will not feel disgust and repulsion when you see a poor man, or a poor woman or a poor child in misery. You will rather experience intense undivided sympathy and attraction. Your whole being will go out towards identification. You will feel, "It is impossible for me to have my comfort, and for this poor one, who is truly myself, to have discomfort." Nay, the very discomfort of the poor one whom you see in misery will become your own discomfort until it is relieved. The sympathy as we call it, will grow so intense, that it will not let you rest night or day unless you come to its relief.

There is a noble saying of St. Paul about the unity of the members of the body. He says: "where one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it: and where one member is honoured all the members rejoice with it." He is speaking there in a parable about human society, and the parable of the body is a very perfect one. We know how a pain in one

limb of the body causes pain to other limbs. If I cut my finger, the pain goes right through my body. But perfect though this parable of the body is, it is not so great and perfect as that wonderful word of identity in the Upanishads 'Tatvam Asi.' "Thou art that." For while the limbs of the body are material the "Atman" is immaterial ; while it takes some fraction of time for pain or joy to travel from one part of the body to another, it takes no fraction of time at all for spirit to mingle with spirit, and for sympathy to be expressed.

Sometimes we read in novels of 'love at first sight', meaning that one flash of recognition of two kindred souls creates love ; but if we practise this doctrine of the Advaitam, then love at first sight will be a daily experience. The flash of recognition of my spirit in my neighbour and his spirit in me will be inevitable.

One young student from the South of India wrote to me that he had read in a newspaper, what I had spoken about *Advaitam* and that he had joined one of the Ramkrishna Missions at once in order to put it into practice. He told me that his life had been filled with joy ever since, and that he had been learning the lesson more carefully day by day.

I am not asking you to leave your college studies and join any mission at this time, though in that exceptional circumstance the young student may have been right to leave his. I am rather asking you to find out this truth in the place here in the Surma Valley, where you are living to-day. I would ask you definitely to find it out by living with this kindred sympathy, this identity of truest love to your fellow students. Let the Hindu student love the Mussalman and the Christian and the Mussalman love the Hindu and the Christian, and the Christian love both also. Let them do this, not by going out of the way, but here on this spot, by practising the *Advaitam*.

There is a wonderful story told by the poet Rabindranath Tagore about his own illumination. One early morning, just as the sun was rising and he was looking at the palm trees waving in the light of dawn, the veil of separation seemed to be entirely withdrawn, and he knew himself to be one with every creature in the universe. He saw the cow in the street licking its calf and the sight of that tenderness of mother's love made his heart well up with a fountain of tears of joy. He saw the student in the street placing his arms upon the shoulder of his fellow-student tenderly, and again the whole fountain of his being welled up with love and tenderness. All through the wonderful days that followed, this identity of

himself with every living creature was not with him an abstract theory, but a practical reality. He did things which he could never have done before. People who were before disgusting to him were now seen in their true light and he loved them with a passionate love. His days and nights were filled with love of God and man, and the vision did not pass away or become faded. Then his elder brother said to him: "Let us go together up to Darjeeling, where you may see the great mountains with their eternal snows." He eagerly thought that this wonderful radiance of sympathy and love which he had experienced would be increased by going * up to the hills and seeing the most magnificent sights in the world ; but when he got there instead of increasing, the vision began to fade away. Thus he learnt that it is not by deserting our posts or by leaving our daily duty or going away from the dull routine of life that God is found, but rather that He is found where each one of us is placed to do our daily task, and that the footstool where God's feet rest is among the poorest, lowliest and the lost.

How I wish I could give to you each one at the beginning of your own lives that vision of the *Advaitam*, which the poet saw ; how I wish I could draw away from your young eyes, the veil of Maya which separates us from one another ; how I wish I could make you see the face of Christ my Master, as he says to every one of us : "Inasmuch as you have done it to these very lowest of my brethren, you have done it unto Me." If only I could do this then indeed I should be happy ; then indeed my visit to this Surma Valley would be a blessing that might continue, and bear fruit in the years to come.

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

Vol. III.

OCTOBER, 1925

No. 3

JUDGMENT

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

The young generation of men in the East are everywhere attracted by what they imagine is modern. And they have convinced themselves that Western life is modern. They are seeking from its manners and mentality the magic formula of how to grow modern. They believe that what is called modern represents the principle of indefinite growth and freedom,—it is youth, it is life.

If that is the definition of modern, then we must know that its essential element does not consist in a particular time, but in a particular truth, lacking which a thing of the latest pattern and polish may in reality be out of date and condemned to perish. A number of nations have so perished who were too late in realising that the raft of time, to which they clung believing it to be modern, had already become of the past. Are we sure that the same thing has not happened to the West, and that the atmosphere of turmoil which we find there is not due to the conflict between their present history, which is no longer modern, and the messenger of the future, which was come with its sovereign claim?

Even the paling darkness of the dawn is immensely distant from the morning light, though they are in immediate contact; and who knows if the present history of the West is not already as old as the day of the deluge?

(All that is deeply human is never old. It has the perpetual freshness of imperishable life. Only the acquisitiveness which is not of growth but of hoarding, the cleverness which wins in the game of life with false cards up its sleeve, is crabbed and

wrinkled. The business of slave hunting, however up to date in form and profitable in practice, is old; cannibalism, crude or subtle, direct or indirect, with Christian surname or heathen, is never modern, not even in its beginning.

How can we ever believe that the spirit of the hungry Nation from the west, which for over a century has robbed and humiliated us in the eastern hemisphere, has found the secret of everlasting life in its reckless power? Have we lost all faith in the teaching of the wise: that the passions which mock the eternal and things that defiantly grow out of proportion with their surroundings, can never be lasting?

However that may be, the fact cannot be denied that the outstanding feature of the present age is the way in which the West has spread its physical dominance over the whole world, and is still imposing its mind upon other continents. All the great countries of the East, in some period or other of their history, had to submit to foreign invasion and foreign rule, but such alien contact was either milder in its driving force, or was more in harmony with local tradition and environment, and therefore did not attack the inner bonds of unity which maintained the personality of the people.

A complete change of condition has been brought about by the easy means of communication effected by modern science. It is no longer some resourceful individual, who comes like a comet with a host of mercenary soldiers forming his tail, suddenly crossing the path of a strange people and eventually getting entangled and assimilated; but an entire predatory nation which is able to clutch in its titanic grip the vitals of other races for whom it has no feeling of kinship.

Men who do not come as representatives of some organization, political, commercial or religious, have their simple human sentiments; they are not like ghosts who haunt human habitations and yet do not dwell in them, who obsess living beings and yet do not live their life. Such real individuals naturally tend to establish personal relationships with their neighbours and gradually attain their common unity. But Europe's connection with Asiatic countries has not yet developed that personal character in its organisations,—it is like the pressure of some

callous outgrowth of her nature, which has not the creative touch of life, but only mechanical skilfulness.

✓ The West has come to us like an engineer who lays stone-paved roads across our meadows and orchards, over our trampled verdure, with the primary object of making easy his work of exploitation. However marvellous and convenient this may be, the overwhelming dominance of mere method and skill in our surroundings is demoralising. It so often makes us forget that, compared to life, the machine is too simple, its action too obvious its results measurable in an indubitably definite manner, its concentrated influence directed only towards the surface of our nature.

For the same reason we often witness in western countries the demonstration of immense esteem, approaching hero-worship, for some winner in a game of skill or strength. This has increased to such an inordinate degree, that a professional organiser of such games can claim better remuneration than a cultured teacher, even in an educational institution. The very superficiality inherent in mere proficiency, produces its immediate impression upon the multitude, hiding from them the higher manifestation of truth that has no definite standard of measurement.

✓ The barbarous in us occupies a large place in human nature; it is idolatrous in its instincts, ready to prostrate itself before all representations of power that are external, that compel us to acknowledge them through our greed, or our fear, or our primitive crudity of thought and feeling. In fact the constant sight and contemplation of any success that has colossal magnitude produces the same mentality in us, as in the savage does the fetish, made emphatically apparent by its barbarity of decoration.

However, the West, which has thrust itself upon us, is the utilitarian adventurer, imbued with the idolatry of the Nation; it carries an elaborate paraphernalia of self worship, and claims other continents for its victims of sacrifice. The loudest of all the messages that it has brought to ourselves is: *You are none of us.* For this reason, even its best gifts carry for us an insult, and it is for this very reason that, when we cannot help

accepting them, we feel so small. The West has hurt us deeply with the shock of its greatness. Its very magnificence faces us with its stony gesture of refusal, allowing us to approach it as the earth does the meteorites, merely to feed with them its own dust.

The moral distance which we impose upon men to whose physical proximity we come for exploitation, is immense. This makes them appear so ridiculously diminutive as to be but dimly recognisable by our conscience. It smooths our path of self-seeking to be able to think that others are absolutely other than ourselves, that their human value is represented in coins that have an utterly different mintage from those which we claim for our own. The West, in its relationship with non-western peoples, has for its constant meditation-text : *They are radically and eternally different from ourselves*. Its cult of separateness, which is the cult of the Nation, bristles with doctrines of disdain. It displays its system of canine teeth in the barbed wire fencing round its inhospitable world, in the name of the inborn right to be supercilious, characteristic of a superior civilisation.

Asia, in its dignity of age-long tradition, at first refused to acknowledge Europe's claim of superiority. But gradually it had to own defeat at the hand of the organised power and indomitable self-assertion of the Nation, the latest-born progeny of the West. The spectacle of gigantic success with its unsheathed claws and teeth sank deeper and deeper into Eastern consciousness. The contemptuous sneer which accompanied it rankled in Asia's heart, never allowing it for a moment to remain in forgetfulness of this apparition ; till a day has arrived when Asia, overcome by the stupendous coil of muscle, has gradually yielded itself to the licking tongue of this monster : Organisation of Power.

There has been related in one of our Bengali epics the legend of a merchant who was a devout worshipper of Shiva the Good, the Pure,—Shiva who represents the principle of renunciation and the power of self-control. This man was perpetually persecuted by a deity, the fierce Snake-goddess, who in order to divert his allegiance to herself inflicted the end-

less power of her malignance upon her victim. Through a series of failures, deaths and disasters he was at last compelled to acknowledge the superior merit of the divinity of frightfulness. The tragedy does not lie in the external fact of the transfer of homage from one shrine to the other, but in the moral defeat implied in the ascribing of a higher value of truth to the goddess of success,—the personification of unscrupulous egotism,—rather than to the god of moral perfection.

So long as the West herself believed in this latest evolution of her indomitable self-assertion, and was certain that it was going to give her an indefinite extension of the monopoly of all earthly privileges, we in Asia also humbly believed in her. The western people convinced us at the point of their bayonets that they were the chosen people of God, and that the right to inherit the earth was inherent in their race because of a quality which was contrary to that of meekness. We bowed our head to the belief that external success was the ultimate criterion of truth, and I still remember the shock of surprise I felt when a rumour first came to India about Japan's readiness to accept Christianity because it was the religion of a triumphant success, the religion that had unlimited cash in the banks of its devotees and frightful machines of destruction in their arsenal. The moral humiliation of Asia could go no further, and for a moment I was frightened at the prospect of a whole world some day bringing its homage to the shrine of the Snake-goddess, deserting that of Shiva, the Good.

At that time it was difficult for western people to realise that there was anything lacking in their civilisation,—for they were so fatuously prosperous and comfortable, so smugly respectable in their behaviour among their own kinsmen. They were never tired of smiling at themselves and saying that they were good, because their drawing rooms were crowded with irrelevancy, their roads geometrically straight, their minds clever, methods efficient, arrangements convenient; because their women had pet dogs, pet schemes of benevolence and head-dresses for which creatures of rare beauty from the most inaccessible regions of the earth had paid toll with their lives.

We, who belong to other continents than theirs, dwell in

the obscurity of their shadow, which swallows up our hemisphere, giving us very little chance to bask in the sunshine of their success. For the attitude of success is exclusive, it is by nature suspicious and arrogant. They do not care to come into the heart of our humanity, for it is not needful for their purpose; and they can be excruciatingly funny when they talk about the peculiarity of the smell of our dwelling places, the inscrutability of our countenances, some mannerisms in our code of behaviour, or any exaggerations in our language or gesture which are different from the exaggerations customary with them and therefore unconscious. Even after this they become sincerely amazed when their energetic acquaintance with us fails to evoke in our mind a grateful feeling of adoration, or when their victims show signs of unhappiness. These they ascribe either to the machination of some interested third party, or to the incomprehensible idiosyncracies of the people with whom they deal.

It is because we are so imperfectly real to them that they try to boast of their beneficence by making a long list of the railway lines, telegraph posts, coal mines, tea plantations, and the law and order inflicted upon our lands. Their minds are so densely callous to the needs of our humanity that they are ready to punish us when we do not bless them for what they have done to ourselves, in the way of helping us with the commodities which we hardly need and which they vomit forth because they are a great deal more than they can consume themselves.

Let me quote some lines from an article on "Christian Missions" which came to my notice a few days ago :

The last century has contained instance after instance, in the Far East, in Africa, and in the islands of the sea, in which the preaching of the Gospel has seemed to the natives only preliminary to political or economic outrage. Sometimes the two have gone hand in hand. Not soon will educated Chinese forget that the charter under which the Christian missionary operates in his land was a part of that same Treaty of Nanking that legalised the importation of opium. So it is that these peoples wonder in bewilderment why the bodies that proclaim their

devotion to the setting up of the rule of God can be content with the individual type of missions, while sins that give the very Christian concept of God the lie grow luxuriant.

About the political relations of West and East the writer quotes Tyler Dennet who says :

No nation has escaped the valid charge of bad faith. The guilt of all parties being clearly proven, it has seemed profitless to continue the discussion of guilt with a view to determining the relative degree of wickedness. Each Nation, the United States not excepted, has made its contribution to the welter of evil which now comprises the Far Eastern Question.

Speaking of economic exploitation the same writer observes :

The ruthless manner in which the ancient handicrafts of India were destroyed to favour the mill-owners of England is a matter of parliamentary record. And the tale of the developing industrial life of India, China and Africa is being written in blood. Western business demands, and secures, all sorts of governmental exemptions and favours to ensure its profits when it goes abroad. And again and again, when there, it follows a policy of inhuman hours and starvation wages that is sowing the wind against the future. It is probable that the West thinks of Sir John Bowring—when it thinks of him at all—as the man who wrote :

In the Cross of Christ I glory
Towering o'er the wrecks of time.

But the East remembers him as the indefatigable diplomat whose labours contributed so much to the legalisation of the opium traffic in China.

I agree with the author when he says that "This is the sort of international sin that most grievously besets the future—political injustice, economic exploitation, racial discrimination, material standards of success." But what to my mind is the source of a greater mischief is the fact that bribery on a prodigious scale is being used to persuade whole peoples in the East to sell their future. As the opium has shackled the mind of the coming generation of China in fetters of stupor, the silver

narcotic injected into the people's constitution is creating a chronic national helplessness, inducing a habit which will make the motherland sell her own children. The bribery which has the sanctimonious appearance of benevolence is the most dangerous form of banditry; for through its unctuous exuberance a huge load of ransom noiselessly drags the country to a bottomless insolvency.

We have seen in the late war that moral camouflage creates useful delusion not only in the minds of the opponents but in those of one's own party, and for the same reason a vast ethical department is necessary as an adjunct to the organisation of exploitation. For the hand that draws blood is greatly helped if it is guided by the idea that it is translating some Sunday School lesson into a beautiful practice. In olden times there were tribes of men who throve upon other people's possessions. Not having that sense of decency which wears a protective decoration they used very little material or moral clothing. They are described in history as savage tribes with criminal tendencies. They remained isolated; no respectable peoples copied their manners. Such narrowness of seclusion itself made their mischievous power shortlived and restricted it to a small area.

In modern times they have changed their names and methods, and even while a great portion of the world is being ripped open by the iron claws of their organisation they have no hesitation in believing in the sure foundation of their civilisation and the perfection of its superstructure. It produces such a moral confusion that even we, who are their victims, are willing to copy them.

In fact we are beginning to be ashamed of our trust in what we call *dharma*, the sovereignty of the inner world of ideals. We think that it is a sign of the possession of some brand-new type of cleverness, shiningly up-to-date, to be able to join in the chorus of cynical laughter at a faith in the reality of moral truth.

So we watched for long the outer horizon and there saw no portent of storm-clouds overtaking the fair weather in the

West; in fact, all our meteorological misgivings pointed their arrow-heads to the thunder-bearing forces from the West carrying menace in other directions. We had been witnessing for too long the triumph in human history of the law of natural selection prevalent in the biological world, the elbowing out of the less offensive by the aggressive pressure of a superior pushfulness. All our calculations come to be based upon the working of that law, till, at last, the man in us made his final obeisance to the brute in us and uttered in awe: *Hail, unholy Might!*

While such a hymn of praise was being raised in all the countries of the world, both by the victors and the vanquished, while the races favoured by fortune dreamt of nothing else but the sharpening of their military fangs and the lengthening of their commercial suckers; while the defeated peoples were cherishing the hope, and secretly preparing, to be able one day to contribute their own share of devilry to the political nightmare of the modern cult of nationalism; the most devastating war that ever happened tore into tatters the enormous self-satisfaction of Europe. She has lately been startled into realising that its origin was not from outside.

Up to this moment she had been at the zenith of her power and brilliancy; to outward seeming she had conquered endless time for her boundless prosperity, while she had been moulding with a pitiless success the destiny of millions of alien people to fashion her own footstool and keep it permanently secure. The barometer which recorded the external condition of the atmosphere foreboded a perpetual monotony of fair weather. There had been, no doubt, angry flashes of lightning from the friction created by colliding greeds, but it was firmly believed that the urging of an intelligent self-interest was itself sufficient to check any of these violent gestures from ending in a catastrophe.

Then came the day when everything that had given her supremacy in the world seemed to turn against her and the Science which she had tamed for a hunting expedition tore ugly rents in her own limbs, which still show no sign of healing. So her proud mind has had to come to the conclusion that her

present suffering is not due to any lack of intellectual attainment or material advantage, but to some cancerous growth within her own moral nature.

(This has, at length, given us in Asia the opportunity of judging Europe with our mind freed from the hypnotism of success, —an opportunity necessary for our own salvation. This judgment must not be in a spirit of retaliation, which chuckles at the chance of hurling back at the West some part of the evil-smelling mud which she was never tired of flinging at the unprotected Orient. Nevertheless we must have the courage to judge. For the standard of moral judgment is the true helm of our life.) Lately it has been laughed at by the modern young person for being stationary, and our hold upon it has been slackened. We must regain our confidence in it, knowing that this helm is more necessary for us to-day than ever before, because we are overtaken by a current that is sudden and swift, by winds that are changing, and because we must move among breakers.

^Fight there must be in this world. We cannot make truce with impunity. Our evolution towards the perfect has been and has to be through a series of fights. Our moral judgment is the best weapon we have in the warfare for the preservation of humanity. With it we have to resist, and even to hurt, for the cause of justice. ✓,

Have we not noticed in the modern East how the people who have a highly developed instinct for turning out things of perfect beauty for their daily life show utter crudity in their selection of western articles for show or for use? They completely forget the dignity of the true born aristocracy which they possess in the world of craftsmanship when they try to acquire or imitate the furniture and other western appliances that bear the brand of the outcast. They carelessly allow the aggression of weeds into their garden where flowers have been nourished by the love and the sensitive understanding of generations of their forefathers. It has been made possible because they have blindly surrendered their judgment of excellence, overwhelmed by the spectacle of a robust success. In their

infatuation they rob Apollo of his homage in order to offer it to the image of Hercules.

My heart was filled with shame and pain when I passed by the ruined mounds of the Summer Palace of Pekin, brought to the dust by those who were furiously loud in their condemnation of the destruction of some ancient cathedrals of Europe by their enemies. Yet they can be forgiven, for they knew not what they had been doing. They merely personated an unintelligent storm of fury which had a scientific thoroughness of brutality, and they wantonly destroyed buildings, pictures and objects of art the like of which was never seen before nor will be in the future.

But it fills my heart with despair when I realise that the modern Chinese are themselves helping in the devastation of the genius of China, daily growing used to things that are merely convenient and forgetting the miracle of creative touch which their fingers have acquired. It shows a laziness of apathy which is uncivilised. True civilisation knows the value of things that belong to the higher nature of man and is ever ready to take trouble to produce them, use them, and maintain them in their excellence. To succumb to the temptation of cheap production and hasty utility is the sign of the shallow mind that seeks its release from the strenuous claim of high aspiration in the vulgar comfort of standardised respectability. The educated China of to-day seems to have surrendered its judgment of taste and through this defeat is threatened with a desert of white monotony swallowing up the colours and features of its civilisation.

✓(The surrender of moral judgment is also a defeat through which the invasion of the West is laying its stony road across the soul of the East, leading most of its traffic of ideas to the gambling den of commerce and politics, to the furious competition of suicide in the arena of military lunacy. Shady paths that ran into various avenues of life carrying the invitation of hearts and the call of co-operation, are one by one being closed. This also is helping the monotonous extension of that aspect of the West which is not fruit-bearing.

But we must not allow this to go on. We must find our

voice to be able to say to the West : "You may force your things into our homes, you may obstruct our prospects of life,—but *we judge you*. You may ignore our judgment. Materially it will not injure you, nor check you in your climbing up the dizzy precipice of profit and power, but it will save us from moral degradation. We refuse to humiliate ourselves by saying that you are worthy of obedience because you are strong, worthy of respect because you are rich."

What I have discussed above only shows that in its relation to the eastern peoples the aspect of western character which has come uppermost is not only insulting to us but to the West itself. Nothing could have been more unfortunate in the history of man than this. For all meetings of men should reveal some great truth which is worthy of a permanent memorial, such, as for instance, had been the case of India's meeting with China in the ancient time.

At the moment when the West came to our door, the whole of Asia was asleep, the darkness of night had fallen over her life. Her lights were dim, her voice mute. She had stored up in her vaults her treasure, no longer growing. She had her wisdom shut in her books. She was not producing living thoughts or fresh forms of beauty. She was not moving forward but endlessly revolving round her past. She was not ready to receive the West in all her majesty of soul.

The best in us attracts the best in others : our weakness attracts violence to our neighbourhood, as thinness in the air attracts a storm. To remain in the fulness of our manifestation is our duty, not only for ourselves but for others. We have not seen the great in the West because we have failed to bring out the great that we have in us and we delude ourselves into thinking that we can hide this deficiency behind borrowed feathers.

Yet, through all our shame and our suffering, we have to acknowledge that the West is great. With her science she has offered a grand illumination to the path of reason. Some people in the East are in the habit of reviling science, calling it materialistic. They may as well say that incendiarism is in the fire. Science is truth. It is immaterial. It gives us freedom

in the realm of matter. It brings our mind into touch with the eternal at the uttermost brink of the finite. What if science can help some temperaments solely to cultivate materialism,—cannot religion do the same? We have witnessed in the East the grossest form of materialism and the cruellest form of inhumanity stalking abroad in our society wearing the uniform of spiritual culture. We constantly see the epicureanism of religious emotion, indulged in by self-centred individuals, admired by simple-minded people as piety in full blossom.

On the other hand, the usual form of spiritual expression we find in the lives of the best individuals in western countries is their love of humanity, their spirit working through their character; their keen intellect and their indomitable will leaguering together for human welfare. In their individuals it reveals itself in loyalty to the cause of truth for which so many of them are ready to suffer martyrdom, often standing heroically alone against some fury of their national insanity. When their wide human interest, which is intellectual, takes a moral direction, it grows into a fulness of intelligent service of man that can ignore all geographical limits and racial habits of tradition. The goodness which is undaunted in its chivalrous adventure, and love of truth, variedly active and widespread in its ministration, we do not see in the East.

But, because in their individual lives the western peoples have raised the tower of their moral standard so high, the ravage of their national unrighteousness at the base is fraught with dangerous consequence. Bespattering the whole world with their diplomatic lies, continually adding to the number of victims for their man-eating prosperity, scientifically crushing the human rights of large continents of races, spreading a contagion of ugly carbuncles all over the earth with the impurity of their utilitarian touch, keeping their snarling nastiness bared at the entrance of their miserly national mansion,—they have, in all these, an ever increasing gravitational pull against the top of their greatness. The fall will be terrific.

But what is most unfortunate for us in Asia is the fact that the advent of the West into our continent has been accompanied not only by science, which is truth and therefore welcome, but

by an impious use of truth for the violent purpose of self-seeking which converts it into a disruptive force. It is producing in the countries with which it is in contact a diseased mentality that refuses moral ideals, considering them to be unworthy of those who aspire to be rulers of men, and who must furiously cultivate their fitness to survive. That such a philosophy of survival, fit for the world of tigers, cannot but bring a fatal catastrophe in the human world, they do not see. They become violently angry at those who protest against it, fearing that such a protest might weaken in them the animal that should be allowed to survive for eternity.

Doctors know that infusion of animal blood into human veins does not give vigour to man but produces death, and the intrusion of the animal into humanity will never be for its survival. But faith in man is weakening even in the East, for we have seen that science has enabled the inhuman to prosper, the lie to thrive, the machine to rule in the place of *Dharma*. Therefore in order to save us from the anarchy of weak faith we must stand up to-day and judge the West.

But we must guard against antipathy that produces blindness. We must not disable ourselves from receiving truth. For the West has appeared before the present-day world not only with her dynamite of passion and cargo of things but with her gift of truth. Until we fully accept it in a right spirit we shall never even discover what is true in our own civilisation and make it generously fruitful by offering it to the world. The culture, the humanity of the West do not belong to the Nation but to the People.

While nations fight for their exclusive possessions, the peoples share with one another their true wealth. And the highest spirit of the peoples of the West, their loyal love of truth and active love of man, we must try to make our own in order to impart to our life a movement and to our ideals a vitality that shall give them the impulse to produce new flower and fruit.

THE INDO-ARYAN GODS OF THE VEDIC PERIOD.

By DR. STEN KONOW.

From their old homes beyond the north-western frontier the Indo-Aryans had brought some fundamental ideas and conceptions,—the belief in numerous uncontrollable forces and potencies which are of vital importance for man's life in the world, and some half-social, half-religious ideas about the sacredness of the laws and regulations prevalent in the family and the State. And their conception of the primeval forces had, as we have already seen, partly been remodelled after the pattern of powerful Aryan kings. The general impression, which we get from the Vedas of the mentality of the Vedic Aryans, is that it had, in essential features, remained at the Indo-European stage.

It is impossible to understand the later development unless we bear in mind that the fundamental conception was not that the Universe was ruled by gods, or heavenly kings, who could if they liked, follow their varying moods. The world was regulated by ideas, by primeval forces, which could only act in conformity with their own nature, and in accordance with the eternal laws inherent in them.

This notion might be modified, and indeed it did become modified, under the influence of the state of things when royal power became paramount and could dictate its own laws. It was bound to become still further modified when conditions became unsettled, in times of war and trouble. Then the powerful Chief would often be able to change the regular course of events and lead their development in the direction he wished. In the result the celestial counterparts of the kings, the heavenly rulers, would come to be conceived as self-willed, not bound by law or necessity. But the old foundation was always able to reassert itself. For it was not a matter of chance that the idea of *dharma*, duty and obligation, had always been uppermost in the religious mentality of the Indo-Aryans. That was the necessary consequence of their original conception of the universe as permeated by ideas and forces and regulated by them.

But even at a primitive stage man has often risen to the conception of more universal forces, whose activity is essential for the common welfare, and whose worship must be undertaken in common. We have already thought it possible to trace such a conception in the Indo-European period, in the belief in the universal force of generation and fertility, which was hailed and worshipped in public processions, and as a common undertaking. And such universal potencies are not bound to display their activity in our nearest surroundings. They are freed from immediate connection with us,—they are universal, apparently abstract ideas, but looked upon as almighty substances and potencies.

The ancient Indo-Europeans raised their thoughts above the earth-bound existence and looked upwards. There they saw the eternal luminary of the Sun, benefiting the whole world, and the conception of these friendly forces was influenced by what they saw. Their abode was the bright sky, their sphere was light and not darkness, they were *devas*, roaming high above, like the sun, and also capable of displaying their activity on earth like the sun.

The prominent position occupied by gods such as Mitra and Varuna, both guardians of truth and engagements, points to the conclusion that the Aryan period was comparatively peaceful and quiet. After the Aryans had entered India, the state of things was evidently changed. In the hymns of the Rigveda we have the echo of continuous wars and struggles. The Aryans pushed forward, and the old inhabitants offered a determined resistance. We hear about their fortresses and fastnesses, which could only be reduced by energetic display of strength. The sword, and not the law or the peaceful compact, carried the day.

In such circumstances we would expect to find that conceptions of a different description with regard to the higher powers come into the forefront. A god like Varuna, who was *dhr̥tavrata*, who took care that solemn engagements were kept, would be less able to give the fighting Aryan what he needed at the moment, than a deity who stood for physical strength and vigour, for boldness and irresistible force. And as a matter of

fact it is a god of the latter description who stands in the foreground in the hymns of the Rigveda,—Indra, the valiant hero and warrior, who slays the Dasyus and the Dasas, reduces their kings and makes them the *dásas* or slaves of the Aryans.

At first sight this change may seem to be a step backwards. Mitra and Varuna stood for ideas of a higher kind than Indra, the hero of irresistible strength. We should be inclined to speak of a retrograde civilisation, where power and might were substitutes for righteousness and truth. But the development of a people cannot be judged by such formulas. Civilisation, even in its highest and most spiritualised forms, may easily lead to stagnation, where the old ideas, which were once living realities become mere forms, without life and possibility of advance. The vigorous expansion, the necessity of exerting oneself to the almost of one's abilities, will call to the front such qualities and faculties which have been dormant in times of peace and tranquility, and only energetic self-assertion and exertion will enable a people to do justice to itself and to the world. Difficulties and dangers are often the best training.

There is, moreover, one consideration which should not be overlooked in connection with the apparent change of mental horizon with which we are met when we turn from the Aryan to the Vedic period. Mitra and Varuna were kings, *rájan*, it is true, and they were even *samráj*, supreme rulers. But at the same time they were guardians of eternal truth and law, themselves bound to adhere to their, agreements. Indra, on the other hand, is *swaráj*, a ruler with his own will, who need not feel himself bound and restricted. We might say that the former idea is morally the higher but on the other hand the latter is bound to lead to a more exalted conception of divinity, as absolutely free in its self-assertion, with unlimited power not only to perform valorous deeds, but also to help man against overwhelming odds, even against laws which seemed to be absolutely binding. Indra as he is hymned in the Rigveda has paved the way to the belief in an almighty and merciful god, as the Indian mind has fancied him in later times, and also to the conception of man as free and unlimited in his choice, for good as for evil.

The name of Indra is not of Indian origin. The Iranians also knew it, but with them Indra is only a demi-god of subordinate rank, and there cannot be any doubt that Indra did not rise to the predominant position which he occupied in the Rigveda before the Aryans had come to India. It was then that the circumstances of life made it necessary to appeal to a divine protector who could give the Aryans what they needed,—strength and victory. His names seem to characterise him as the strong one, *Ina*, the master of power and force (*indriya*); *Sakra*, powerful, able, the lord of strength; *Sachipati*, which latter appellation was subsequently interpreted to mean “Sachi’s husband,”—an idea that contributed to the development of female consorts of the great gods.

We may assume that the idea of “The strong one” had already to a certain extent been developed by our Indo-European ancestors. But it was not till circumstances pushed their demand of strength into the foreground that he became the mighty God whom we learn to know in the Rigveda. Thus on Indian soil, he became the central figure in all tales and traditions, old and new, where there is the question of over-whelming strength.

The most popular tale about Indra bears reference to pre-Indian as well as to Indian tradition. It is the old, presumably Indo-European story of the vigorous slayer of the dragon. In India the dragon is the powerful and crafty serpent Vritra, who has shut up the life-giving waters behind lofty mountains and lies on them, preventing them from fertilising the Aryan country. Indra pierces the rocks with his thunderbolt and slays the serpent. Through the hole he has bored, the rivers emerge and their waters flow through the home of the Aryans, giving life and fertility.

Different scholars have given different explanations of this myth. According to some it shows that Indra is an old god of thundering or the thunderstorm, according to others he is the god of sun and spring, who delivers the frozen waters from the spell of the demon of winter and ice, in which latter case the Vritra tale would have to be considered as inherited from a period when the Aryans were settled in a colder country farther to the North.

When once the tradition had been brought into shape, it was quite natural that it should be enlarged and combined with other tales, and also that it should receive a distinctly mythical colouring. As the Aryans pushed further towards the east, the changed climatic conditions also came to exercise a certain influence, and Indra was necessarily brought into connection with the monsoon. But the fundamental conception always remains the same. Indra is at work wherever we notice an unusual display of irresistible strength and force.

It is superfluous to enter into an analysis of the different tales and stories about Indra's feats. The nature of the conception connected with him is clear enough, it is in full agreement with the fundamental notions which the Indo-Aryans had inherited from their ancestors. I shall only mention one detail, because it is of interest for our appreciation of the development of religious ideas.

Indra is, as we have seen, a king, a *Svarāj*, who does not know any other law than his own will, and his proper field of action is the battleground, where strength and valour carries the day. It is evident that we are here faced with the results of changed circumstances within Aryan society. During the wars of conquest, the Aryan King was above all the leader in battle, and not so much the dispenser of law and justice, and this change in his position is reflected in Indra. He is a fighter and not a judge, and while Varuna and Mitra were accompanied by representatives of powers and ideas which were of primary importance in times of peace,—the so-called *Adityas*,—Indra is surrounded by warriors in arms, with shining spurs,—the so-called *Maruts*.

It is a consequence of the position occupied by Indra, that he is assigned a prominent place in the worship of the Aryans, especially at the big sacrifices of the kings and chiefs. The *Rigveda* is, above all, a collection of hymns sung on such occasions, and his name would accordingly be one of those most frequently met with. Such is actually the case.

We have not, however, any right to infer therefrom that Indra played the same prominent rôle in the daily worship of

individual Aryans. On the contrary, we can confidently state that such cannot have been the case. Even in those days of ancient wars, the Aryans had to think of their cattle and their cultivation, and had to settle their mutual interests in the traditional way, and not by means of arms and force. And in their daily life they had to reckon with the old forces and potencies which, at every step, made their influence felt. In addition to the great heavenly kings who were invoked at the great sacrifices, they certainly worshipped these forces and their more or less personified representatives, and we have every reason for assuming that, in everyday life the importance of such minor gods was greater than that of Indra.

It would be unwise to apply statistical methods and draw conclusions from the greater or lesser frequency with which a name is mentioned in the Rigveda, as to the relative importance of different gods. Those who became the most powerful gods in later times, are comparatively rarely invoked in the Rigveda. That does not, however, prove that they were of minor importance, but only that they had a smaller place at the big sacrifices at which the hymns of the Rigveda were used. They stood for other forces which these big sacrifices did not directly aim at realizing.

One of these gods is Vishnu, who is mentioned barely a hundred times in the Rigveda and to whom but five entire hymns are addressed. According to the statistical standard, therefore, his worship would be deemed to have been of secondary importance. But the reality seems to be quite different : Vishnu is apparently an old and important god.

That he goes back into a distant past, can be inferred from what we learn about him in the Rigveda : no detailed accounts but chiefly indications, which to us are often obscure, but which to the Vedic Aryan must have been full of meaning because the myths and traditions, to which they refer, were familiar, having been transmitted from generation to generation. It was enough to mention some catch-words, and everybody knew what was meant. Vishnu must accordingly represent ancient notions, which had been condensed into standing formulas, already in the oldest Rigvedic period.

If we simply collect the most prominent features of the picture of Vishnu which are met with in the Rigveda, the result is apparently meagre. We constantly hear about his three steps, with which he measures space. We are told that he provides broad dwellings for human beings, who are settled within his three steps. Of these steps the two first ones are to be perceived by ordinary men, and the makers of the sacrifice see the last and highest one in the likeness of an eye in the skies. There seems to be a reference to the sun in this saying: Vishnu's highest steps takes us up to the upper limit of the visible world, where the sun at noon can be considered as his foot-print.

It is a similar idea which has found expression when it is stated that Vishnu has supported the vault of the sky above, and fastened the earth with pegs. The wide space between earth and heaven, within which the life of all animate beings is displayed, has been created by him. And he it is who supports and nourishes heaven, earth and all beings, not however in self-willed moods, but as the protector of law, as the womb of *rita*, eternal truth.

In later times we hear more about Vishnu's stages. A tale is told about a fight between the Devas and the Asuras, who have now become the enemies of the gods. The devas are unsuccessful, and now they place Vishnu, who is often stated to be identical with *yajña*, the sacrifice, at their head, and ask the Asuras to grant them as much as Vishnu can take in three steps. This request is granted, and the sacrifice (Vishnu) proves to be equal to the whole world. Sometimes this myth takes the shape of a fairy-tale. Vishnu makes his appearance as a *vāmana*, a dwarf, but after the request of the gods has been granted, he increases in size, so that he pervades the universe in three steps.

Such tales cannot, however, give us the origin of the underlying ideas in Vishnu's physiognomy. When his name is given to the dwarf with long steps, that only shows that this wide stepping was an essential feature in his picture, and as a matter of fact that is almost the only thing which we know about Vishnu in the time of the Rigveda.

In such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that Vishnu has been explained in more than one way. Most

scholars have considered him to be an ancient sun-god, and draw attention to the fact that he is sometimes identified with the sun, and that he wears the *chakra*, the disc, which has been explained as a symbol of the sun. But then we have already seen that more than one god has been identified with the sun, and with the explanation of the base of Indo-Aryan religion as a worship of forces and powers,—which I think is the only possible one,—such a state of things is easily explained.

Many different forces are observable in the sun. It gives heat like fire, it gives light, it makes man up to his work, it looks like an eye watching the dealings of man, and it measures out the sky and the day. The representatives of all such faculties and energies are therefore at work in and through the sun and can be identified with it. Varuna and Mitra look on man's doings through the sun-eye. Consequently they are there in the sun and might be identified with it, just as other gods are really present in the image or symbol. And Vishnu's activity when he measures space can be displayed through the sun, wherefore he can be said to be seated in the sun. But he is not the sun. We therefore also hear that he has created the sun. But the conception of his three steps as rising into higher and higher spheres is not consistent with the movement of the sun, which first rises and afterwards goes down.

Other explanations are no more satisfactory. Vishnu has been explained as the lord of the wide plains or as the prototype of the soul, or rather as the soul of the principle of generation, etc. But none of these explanations can be naturally derived from what we know about Vishnu.

The root from which Vishnu is formed seems to be *vish*, to be active. His activity must have something to do with things which were of vital importance to the members of the Aryan society, to institutions and regulations which were believed to embody occult forces,—not such as are of use in war, but such as had to be scrupulously observed in daily life. And therefore his name is not so far mentioned in the Rigveda, which has been largely coloured by the conditions prevailing during the troublous times of the conquest of India. But he has evidently a greater place in the religious life of the people than can be judged from

the frequency of the mentioning of his name, and the germs were there from which the great god of later Hinduism was developed,—the protector of man and the guardian of established order, the god whom man loves,—while Siva is preëminently the divine being who is worshipped in fear and trembling.

Siva can also be traced back into the times of the Rigveda, where he is, however, usually called Rudra, *i.e.* probably the howler, wherefore he has sometimes been explained as a personification of the howling wind. The underlying idea is, however, much wider, and comprises everything which fills man's heart with terror and awe. His hue is horrible red, or bluish black, the colours of death and terror, and he haunts such places where man does not feel comfortable, cross-roads and cemeteries; he is met with in lonely places, in the hills or in the woods; and wherever man is struck with an inexplicable feeling of danger or fear. We hear of people living away from human society and giving themselves up to practices reminding us of the latter Yogins who drink poison with Rudra.

The denomination Siva is already met with in the Rigveda, and has a meaning which seems to be little suited to the character of the dread god. It means gracious, and Rudra seems to be anything but gracious. It is, however, comparatively easy to understand the use of such an application. A haughty tyrant is not rarely addressed as a gracious king. In such ways of talking to people whose evil temper we have reason to fear, we can still trace a mentality which is quite common with primitive people. The common attitude towards Rudra, however, is not one of trust and attachment. He is not invoked to come and help men, but to ward off the danger which is his proper sphere of action, and offerings are brought him in order to keep him at a distance. Though this is, at first sight, difficult to understand, Rudra or Siva thus later on became one of the chief gods of Hinduism.

There is also another consideration which should not be overlooked. There is a distinct tendency to avoid the use of the terrible god's name. It can even be said that Rudra is not, perhaps, a real name at all, but rather a descriptive appellation. He is similarly called *Ugra*, powerful; *Bhima*, terrible; *Isa*,

lord; *Mahadeva*, great god; and in the course of time the number of these designations increases. Some of them have probably been borrowed from local gods or demons, but all of them can be applied to the one great God. Man in this way trains himself to see a unity behind all the different manifestations, to rise to the conception of one single power behind the changing complexity.

We now come to an old god, who may perhaps be an inheritance from the Indo-European period, in Pushan, whose name has been connected with the Greek Pan. He seems to be a personification of those forces which regulated the relations of the Aryan to his cattle. He knows every path and road, he follows the cattle and protects it and brings it safely home, and he is also able to recover what has been lost. In such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that he was thought to exercise his activity through the sun, and his name is often used for the sun. But we have already seen how little we can in reality attach to such an image. Everything which we hear about Pushan points to the conclusion that he belongs to a period when the raising and tending of cattle was of primary importance in the life of the Aryan, and we understand why his worship declined when agriculture became the chief occupation of the people.

Amongst the oldest Vedic gods we must further reckon the Asvins, a divine couple who seem to be related to the Dioskouroi of the Greeks. In both cases we have to do with two gods, who are considered as twins and the sons of Dyaus (Greek *Zeus*) and are intimately connected with a female deity who evidently has something to do with the sun: *Surya* in India and *Helena* in Greece. The two pairs are further of a similar nature in both traditions; they help man in danger and peril, and especially on the sea. As we have similar traditions preserved by another Indo-European people, the *Lets*, there cannot be any doubt that the fundamental conception dates back into the Indo-European period.

If we now want to understand the nature of the divine twins, it is of little use to turn to their names. We have no other means of understanding the nature of the Asvins than to examine

their features as they are represented by tradition. And then we find that they are throughout conceived as saviours and helpers in misfortune and danger, and especially on the sea. Professor Gildner has therefore explained them as saints who are invoked in times of need. They are further divine physicians and surgeons, who heal from disease, make the blind see and the lame walk. They can make the old man young, they provide a husband for the old spinster and they gradually become the typical best men to the bride. On the whole, healing, restoration and saving are the outstanding features in their physiognomy, and we must try to explain them from that point of view.

They were, as the other gods, primeval forces, viewed in the likeness of men in accordance with the common tendency to look on everything in the universe, even forces and ideas, as filled with life and individuality. *Puramdhi*, the swelling fullness; *aditi*, limitlessness; *nirriti*, destruction; were active self-working entities, as well as *kāma*, craving; *manyu*, anger, or the "gatherer" or "heaper" at work when the harvest was brought in. There is nothing of Nature or Sun-worship in all this. The forces and potencies which were at work in everyday life were of greater consequence for man than the sun, the moon or the stars: religion begins on earth and not in the skies.

It makes little difference whether the personal colouring is distinctly apparent or not. Where everything is looked on as filled with life, there is no essential difference between personal or impersonal power. In my own country the common people tell us that "he" blows, or rains or snows. This "he" is more vivid than the "it" of the educated classes and more akin to the Indo-European notion, according to which all such occurrences are due to self-exciting forces, which their activity are naturally conceived in personal or half-personal shape.

A similar result ensued when the eye dwelt on the relationship existing between the original potency and its manifestation. The former would easily be conceived not only as a cause but also as an agent, because an agent could so often, in common life, be detected behind the activity. We have already made the acquaintance of some such half-personal agents, the lord of the field, *kshetrasyapati*, the lord of the dwelling,

the lord of the field, *kshetrasyapati*; the lord of the dwelling, *vástoshpati*, etc.

Still more individuality seems to be felt behind the name *Prajápati*, the lord of progeny, who makes the offspring of the Aryan numerous and also fertilizes the cattle. He gradually come to be considered as the lord of creation and preservation, partly under the influence of ancient notions about some primeval creator behind creation. But he never seems to have become a really living god and always retains traces of a more or less theoretical origin. In this respect he resembles another creation of theoretical reasoning; *Brihaspati* or *Brahmanaspati*, the vague personality seen behind the sacred spell or incantation.

Such personifications had, however, little of actual reality about them, and could only with difficulty be crystalized into real gods. The potency or energy for which they stood was the principal thing, and not the agent. It is therefore no matter for wonder when we find more than one name given to the creative force. We hear about a *Visvakarmá*, the "all doer", and about a *Dháttri*, whose name simply mean "creator", and so forth.

Where such agents come to play a certain rôle in popular imagination, their activity becomes the object, as we have seen, of traditional tales, and they receive a more pronounced personal colouring. Such has been the case with *Tvashtri*, the carpenter or joiner, who fashions Indra's thunderbolt and other marvellous objects, even the embryo in the womb.

When such an agent gets a wider scope of action, he may develop into a real god. Such seems to have been the case with *Savitri*, the instigator, who is at work wherever some force is manifest. He rouses man to his day's work; he causes the sun to begin his daily course, he pushes the night into existence, in short he is, as an ancient commentator says, *sarvasya prasavitri*, he who urges everything forward. He may enter the sun and work through the sun, and so is often said to be the sun. We are however already prepared to understand such ideas, which do not indicate that *Savitri* is an old sun-god.

It is necessary to repeat that in such divine agents there is nothing which can properly be called nature-worship. The

underlying notion is throughout that of force and energy. But such powers and energy-substances were of course also to be found in nature. They were present in the sun, and as their receptacle *Surya*, the sun, is frequently praised. But it is only in later times that *Surya* seems to become a real god. In the *Rigveda* he is just as often created by some other god, and the natural background is always apparent. Similar is the case with *Ushas*, the dawn. In the hymns praising her we often also observe the fine feeling of beauty which constitutes one of the chief charms in Indian poetry. But she as well as *Surya* are much more the objects of marvel and wonder than of worship, though there is a distinct religious element in the praise bestowed on them; their strict observance of law and order becomes an example for man.

The powers and forces manifested in nature and the skies were, as we have seen, clearly recognised. But they were of less importance than those energy-substances which framed man's destiny in daily life. Some of them might become more important on certain occasions. Thus *Váyu*, the blower, or *Váta*, the wind; *Parjanya*, the rainer; *Ápas*, the waters; are hymned and praised. But at the bottom we always see the conception of power, and not simply the natural phenomenon.

Some forces were of special importance for certain classes and castes, and they were then especially worshipped by them. In the *Rigveda* we are preëminently faced with the class-gods of the priests and those who were active at the sacrifice: *Agni*, the fire, which received the offerings and carried them up to the gods, and *Soma*, the invigorating and intoxicating drink which the gods liked, just as Aryans themselves were fond of it. The moon's decrease was mythologically explained by the assumption that it was the *soma* imbibed by the gods, and later on *Soma* became a common designation of the moon. But also here we can throughout discern the original conception.

On the whole we can thus reaffirm that the religious mentality in the *Rigvedic* period was essentially the old Indo-European one: a belief in higher forces, which man could not control, and a worship of those forces and of the vague personal-

ities displaying them. And behind them we can still trace a more universal force, the idea of eternal reality, *rita*, which filled all the forces and agents and raised them above the realm of man.

Whenever the limits within such an agent, or the primeval force for which he stood, were removed, the necessary conditions were given for the development of mighty gods. Such was the case with the Aryan gods, Mitra and Varuna, and such was even more the case with Indra, the ancient demon of uncontrollable strength and vigour. In the troublous times of war and battles, strength and vigour were prominent everywhere, and their representative Indra was bound to loom large in the imagination of the Vedic Aryans.

We can accordingly sum up the religious mentality of Rigvedic times as follows: the ancient Indo-European framework was still there, with its belief in self-existing forces and powers, which were usually viewed in personal or half-personal shape. But from this background great gods had risen or were rising, the heavenly counterparts of the powerful rulers on earth, with power to assert themselves against overwhelming odds and even to satisfy their wishes and realise their will in spite of all obstacles, against every universal law.

THE BREAK UP OF THE QUADRUPLE EMPIRE.

By KSHIROD-CHANDRA SEN.

Good cometh out of evil. Hate is the mother of love; co-operation is the offspring of competition; poverty is the cause of prosperity; civilisation shows maximum vigour where Nature is most unyielding and even cruel. Human life is the meeting ground of opposites, and the problem of life is how to eliminate one of them, and permanently adhere to the other.

Social evolution is a process and product of differentiation combined with an integrative purpose. The best result is obtained when the purpose starts the process, and runs through it to the end, keeping pace with it while controlling its progress. Where the strong undercurrent of purpose runs faster than the process, or weakly lags behind it, the result is unsatisfactory; because in the first case it creates hindrances, retarding progress; and in the second, it fails to provide safeguards against the incursions of anarchical tendencies. The process produces *many* out of *one*, while the purpose keeps the resulting many bound up into a unity.

By normal evolution, then, society grows in complexity without losing its one-ness. The whole acquires new strength and vivacity by the differentiation of its parts, by change from likeness to unlikeness, because mutual helpfulness and adequate interdependence is maintained between them. The parts are by nature self-assertive, and characterised by a love of liberty and independence, but the whole manages them adroitly so as to keep them united by an enlightened egoism. The whole is thus sustained in progressive vigour and order, while the parts gain not only in destructive individuality, but also in efficient vitality. And this running equilibrium is kept up by the interplay of Nature and Reason.

The desire for happiness being the driving power, social progress implies the harmonious development of Nature—self-assertion and immediate pleasure—on the one hand, and of

Reason—foresight and permanent happiness—on the other. The egoistic love of life lies at the bottom of the whole process, sweetened and softened by the artistic beauty of altruism slowly and surely developing itself to cover the growing shame of barbaric selfishness. Social decadence begins when the harmony shows weakness ; when the equilibrium between the driving power of Nature and the guiding power of Reason is disturbed ; when Nature insists on cash payment while Reason insists on a moratorium.

In the conflict between capitalism and communism in the civilised countries of the West at the present day, the clamour for cash is obstreperous on both sides, and the State, as representing the organism of society, having lost the guiding power of Reason, is unable successfully to impress upon either party the true value of the credit system on which civilisation has so far stood. The harmony of development has been lost according to some statesmen ; the true harmony of development is trying to displace the false harmony of ages, according to others. Economic communalism now divides entire nations, every man enlisting himself on one or the other side. The complete defeat of orthodoxy will lead either to rebarbarisation, or to a new and higher form of civilisation ; but the latter can only come by the complete abrogation of the root principle of communalism, *viz.*, the principle of egoism devoid of reinforcement by Reason.

When the driving force of Nature assumes a contemptuous attitude towards the guiding influence of Reason, society suffers from communalism, which is but a wider form of personalism. Its integrative power has then lost vigour, and the differentiative process is working without due control. When Reason, on the other hand, becomes meticulous, society loses in virility, and stagnation follows in the name of stability ; that is to say, when reason loses its reasonableness, disaster stares society in the face.

Stability means static equilibrium, while society needs a moving equilibrium,—a dynamic balancing of the opposite forces of Nature and Reason. The predominance of either is destructive of civilisation. War issues out of the preponderance of Nature, and the peace of Nirvana slowly creeps in with the

undue preponderance of Reason. Stability brings with it the sleep of peace, vampire-like, by sucking the blood out of the heart of the social organism. It is as injurious to social development as the standing bicycle is to the equipoise of the cyclist.

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, in the last number of this Quarterly, has dwelt on the conflict between Nature and Reason, in his inimitable style, in dealing with the degeneration of the holy institution of marriage in India, with an indirect reference to the spirit of feminism, now so rampant all over the world. Anybody desiring to understand the true conditions of combined social stability and progress, cannot do better than carefully study this essay on the *Indian Ideal of Marriage*, which though it directly deals with the institution of marriage only, is pregnant with gifts of truth on social questions of a much wider range.

The conflict between the activities of Nature and Reason is variously designated by philosophers. Huxley distinguishes between the cosmic and the ethical process. Professor Wundt contrasts them as Nature and Culture, Dr. Annie Besant as Nature and Nurture. The discrimination generally intended to be made is that suggested by the terms Nature and Art. Dr. Tagore has used the words *Life* and *Mind* to bring in the conception of the five *Kôshas* of the Hindu philosophy to bear upon the problem of social progress in general, and of the evolution of married life in particular.

The next stage of progress is indicated by Dr. Tagore as *spiritual* with much hesitancy, for he finds that word lacking in definitiveness, while there exists no other expression in the English language precisely corresponding to what is known as the *Jñānamaya Kôsha* in Hindu philosophy. It may be simply called, to avoid possible controversy, the super-social state,—in which Dr. Tagore anticipates that Woman will shake off her present subjection, and in which man may reasonably expect to acquire a higher freedom and a closer communion with the Supreme without losing the advantages of social life as it now exists within the ramparts of restraints built by Reason or Art,—a state in which Love will more definitely preponderate over

hate, peace over war, true knowledge over illusion, the kingdom of God over that of the Devil. Dr. Tagore's creative predilections impel him to ask Woman to adhere to her cult of preservation, instead of desperately engaging in adventurous pursuits likely to lead her into conflict with her own inner nature. But his theory of social progress does not lose a particle of its value because women may or may not admit the absolute wisdom of his exhortation to them, or comply with it in practice.

Destruction is not so redundant or hateful as we generally suppose, and the supersocial or the *spiritual* state may possibly be preceded by what we may designate *destructive*, as contrasted with *creative* processes. To the optimist, the destructive contest between man and woman, between men and men, between capital and labour, between rulers and ruled, between ascendant and subject races, seem to be the prelude to a higher state of human existence. After all, social progress is the product of the combat between Nature and Art, between Natural Right and Vested Interest.

Whatever peace the world has seen has been attained through war. But war does not necessarily imply the use of gun-powder and gas. Evil must be resisted, whether passively or actively, by the power of self-sacrifice reducing the aggressor to shame, or by the power of self-assertion arousing fear in the heart of the latter,—in either case bringing him to reason. Aggression and counter-aggression of muscles and intelligences (called cunning in anthropology) constitute life and social progress, in the form of a combined process of immediate destruction and ultimate creation. Nature never dies in the heart of either man or woman. She may be kept in subjection by Reason; but when Reason itself revolts against the existing order, Nature may well be unchained for assisting in amelioration.

Reason or the "Mind" is not an absolutely fixed entity. It is subject to fluctuations in its general progress. In the higher planes of its existence it may suggest passive resistance,—such as the Hindus of Java availed of in order to avert subjection to the Dutch, whose Nature ultimately recoiled from the destruction of these innocent people unwaveringly exposing

themselves to gun-fire and sword-cuts for the sake of political freedom. In lower planes it may suggest more active opposition. In either case, creation is impossible without destruction, as morning is impossible without midnight. The new moon is the precursor of the full moon.

With this preliminary disquisition, I pass from Feminism to Communalism in general.

In societies developed on normal lines, communalism springs out of aberrations in the course of development, and represents a re-awakening of self-consciousness in sections of society subjected to undue subordination ultimately detrimental not merely to those sections but to the entire organism. The resulting revolt, being met by opposition, emerges as a conflict between two sections of society under the special name of Communalism.

The quadruple empire, ordinarily known as the social organisation, *viz.*, the empire (1) of man over woman, (2) of the minority over the majority, (3) of race over race, and (4) of the magnified man over the natural man, is at this moment tottering to its foundation, being simultaneously attacked in all four aspects.

This Quadruple Empire, which still possesses a beautifully creative *tout ensemble*, was built up by man in his youth, with an undeveloped intellect which has waged a protracted warfare with Nature, growing in power with the expansion of its conquests over its adversary, which resisted it, from within and without, at every point and at every stage of its progress. The subjection of the inner nature sometimes involved tyranny over it. Gradually the pressure of this tyranny, which was general and diffuse at first, became unequally distributed,—some parts of society being subjected to greater suffering than their correlated parts,—and the tyranny over Nature assumed the complexion of tyranny of one section of society over another, by the captivity and corruption of Reason and the establishment of the Devil's right known as vested interest. Thus arose the distinction between the rich and the poor; the capitalist and the labourer; the comfortable parasite and the miserable worker.

The sufferers themselves were so subtly manipulated, specially by their fear of the magnified man, that they lost self-consciousness, and submitted to their condition as complacently as if it were imposed upon them by Nature herself, and not by selfish human Art. In the further progress of the tyranny, the very efficiency of its evasiveness revived after long ages, as a by-product, the dormant self-consciousness of the suffering majority. This self-consciousness has been developing and expanding with an ever accelerating force, and has attained its maximum vigour during the last half-century. It has all along thriven by self-assertion; while vested interest, which visibly felt the pressure and humiliation of defeat a century and a half ago, is now well-nigh routed and compelled to retreat in disorder.

Vested interest began to experience reverses long ago, but they were slow and discontinuous. Thus slaves have been raised into serfs; serfs into villeins; villeins into yeomen; yeomen into gentlemen; and now constitutional resistance is being supplemented by threat of direct action. The final triumph of the suffering majority is only a question of time. In the Western countries, where the development of society has generally proceeded on normal lines, the chief form of communalism is the economic one, commonly known as syndicalism, which divides society into capitalism and communism as the extreme forms of the inherent opposition, with medial forms of divers gradations.

Other types of communalism, after having disturbed society for several centuries, have now all but disappeared from the West. One of them for example is the communalism of religion, or rather superstition. The communalism of Catholics and Protestants, having made a tremendous noise in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, declined in virulence towards the close of the eighteenth, chiefly through the influence of the physiocrats of France, and is now all but silenced by the power of science. Bigotry gave way to tolerance, and tolerance implies the decline of *aberglaube* (*extra-belief*), belief in what is beyond the verifiable, and the disappearance of

Extra-belief has turned human attention to matters of greater interest in practical life; so that the separatist force of religion is now all but dead in the land of agnostic Christianity, which was once so proud of its gnosticism.

Culture has thus killed religious communalism in the civilized West. Is it too much to expect that it will likewise kill it in the East? Philosophers abandoned *aberglaube* in ancient India, but priests and capitalists and militarist statesmen encouraged Extra-beliefs among the masses for the protection of the Quadruple Empire, and for purposes of exploitation. The dismemberment of this ancient empire is the necessary pre-requisite of the disappearance of Communalism from human society.

Lord Bryce enumerated four types of Communalism (Hindrances of good Citizenship) thus :

There have been strifes of different races, or class-groups within the same state. There have been quarrels of religion. There have been struggles over political power between those who held it as their exclusive possession and those who sought to be admitted to share it. There have been struggles between different economic classes in which the poorer strove to improve by legislation their material condition... The three former kinds of conflict have almost passed away from west and middle-European countries with the cooling of religious passion and the democratization of nearly all the states. There remain only conflicts of the fourth kind, which turn upon material conditions, and which tend to become struggles between the richer and the poorer classes. The efforts of the latter to better their lot in the world have often caused, and sometimes justified, revolutions, and several long steps in human progress have been marked by their success.

To put it more succinctly and completely, maladministration of the Quadruple Empire leads to revolt, and to Communalism primarily of four kinds, namely, sexual, political, religious and economic. Lord Bryce makes no mention of sexual communalism, and, from the indirect brief reference to it made by Dr. Tagore, it might seem as if he thought of it as a thing by itself, an uncorrelated element in social Morphology.

Sexual communalism can terminate only by the unification of the sexes, not by the survival of the fittest. The only question is, what form the union should take, or in other words what modifications should be introduced into the institution of marriage as regards duration and co-ordination. Feminism cannot fight to a finish without finishing the race. Peace is bound to come. The only question is, when it will come. Dr. Tagore thinks it will arrive with the metamorphosis of the social into the *spiritual*, or what I call the supersocial state in contrast with the social, which has itself evolved out of the pre-social state.

But can Woman, with advantage, wait in the torment of inaction till the advent of that higher stage, the stage of *Jñāna*, as contrasted with the stage of *Mind*, which has evolved out of the stage of *Life*, which itself presupposes the stage of *Anna*? Can she contentedly adhere to the cult of preservation,—the preservation of the vested interest of man, who has reduced her to abject subjection, and is bent upon keeping her where she is? Woman may never succeed in competing with man in the common activities of the sexes, or in the conventional “special sphere” of man, but man himself has goaded her to engage in such “desperate adventurous pursuits,” by bringing her into “conflict with her own inner nature.”

The poet is so deeply absorbed in enjoying the beauty of *Creation* that he is shy of the occasional intrusive presence of the philosopher who thinks of destruction as a necessary correlate of this beauty.

Economic communalism, also, can only terminate by the unification of capital and labour, not by the survival of the fittest; for such survival would mean the extinction either of capital or of labour, both of which are essential for the production of wealth *i.e.* of the means of subsistence. The only question is, again, what form the union will take.

As monogamy for life is the extreme form of union for the extinction of sexual communalism, so is the coalescence of capital and labour in the same hands the extreme form of union for the termination of economic communalism. Both have been tried and

found wanting. So, either some new form must be devised as a compromise, or the problem left to drift in the stream of Nature. Trades Unionism has rendered pure and complete separation of capital and labour inefficacious for purposes of industrial production. It represents the revolt of labour against capital. Labour has suffered long at the hands of capital and its efforts have been systematically silenced by propaganda of the worship of the iron law of wages; on the other hand retaliation is at this moment being carried to extremes, the old superstition having knocked on the head. Both sides have lost balance of mind, and disaster stares both in the face.

The whole social organism is trembling for very life,—the combat between vested interest and natural right betraying the weaknesses of the existing order in a most melancholy fashion. The contest is not so much between wealth and poverty, as Lord Bryce would make out in the passage quoted before, as between desire for inequality and desire for equality. The condition of the working classes has largely improved during the last half century, but inequality of possessions has increased instead of decreasing; and the higher the standard of living rises among the latter, the stronger grows their desire for equality; and the stronger the desire for equality the greater becomes the actual difference of comforts and possessions.

The clearest example of racial Communalism is in the United States of America, where ten million blacks, mixed up with one hundred and fifty million whites, shew no tendency to declining population. The law of the survival of the fittest has there no visible manifestation, while the law of union in blood and spirit shows no progress. Mulattoes and quadroons, who once gave promise of an increasing whiteness by the process of negro-breeding carried on by whitemen,—in order to keep up the slave-stock biologically when it was dwindling commercially by the operation of the British policy of abolition of the slave trade,—are now relapsing towards pure negro blood by the force of emancipation effected by the civil war of 1861-65. The amalgamators have lost their lucrative vocation, and "Virginia, one of its leading industries" (*Abraham Lincoln's last speech*).

The communal problem is deeply engaging the attention of statesmen in the United States who advocate toleration, in contrast with their less cultured fellow citizens who are inclined to press for the annihilation or repatriation, or failing either, the re-enslavement of the negro. Both sections of Americans are Christian by religion, at least in name. The law of love and brotherhood, preached by the Founder, has nowhere in the world received more contemptuous disregard among the followers of Christ. As Annie Besant might say: "Nature is stronger than Nurture". The skin belongs to Nature, the heart to Nurture. Charles Lamb described the negroes, with due respect for the book of Genesis, as images of God cut in ebony, and produced the most delicious blend of humour and blasphemy for the delectation of the literary world in Christendom. The dissolution of the United States will precede the solution of the Communal problem here adverted to, unless Ku Klux Klanism should disappear by the power of some magic in the meanwhile.

The clearest example of religious Communalism is presented by Syria and Palestine to-day. Here Judaism, Islam and Christianity, all having a common origin, are maintaining a triangular contest for predominance. Here *aberglaube* preponderates over the central belief of religion. "The Eternal that makes for righteousness" yields to the ephemeral that leads along the broad road to its terminal palace. Culture is at its lowest ebb, and the mandatory powers follow the cult of the preservation of their own avaricious interests.

India presents a most confused *mélée* of Communalism in every one of its varieties,—sexual, economic, political, racial and religious. At present the religious type is most painfully prominent, specially as it hampers the political contest between the small ruling section and the numerically larger ruled, because it hinders the progress of nascent Nationalism, which in a country under foreign domination primarily means political communalism. There is no *rapprochement* between Hindus and Mussalmans, or between these and Christians.

Economic Communalism, is emerging into sight in the centres of Indian industry, and is threatening to strangle the latter in its very babyhood. Foreign trades-unionism is fanning

the flame of the communal fire and the imperial state, which owes its origin to rank communalism and maintains itself by the power derived from the weakness due to the same, is not interested in bringing the fire-brigade to bear upon the spreading conflagration.

Such origin of this imperial domination is admitted by the ruling caste; but, as a civilised people, they feel ashamed to aver in so many words that the continuance of religious and other types of communalism is good for the country because necessary for their own domination. The sincerity of their disavowals is, however, suspected, and wherever any communal upheaval takes place, the cultured portion of society is not prevented by scruples of conscience from ascribing it to covert Bureaucratic influence. The plain truth is, that Government in India growingly finds itself in a tight place in reconciling practice with profession, in allowing Truth to appear in public without his spouse, Beauty, or his concubine, Insincerity.

I am afraid I have already exceeded the limit of space, and shall conclude by pointing out that the existing social organization, being founded primarily upon egoism, and so far maintained by enlightened self-interest without the aid of true inner moral elevation,—and communalism being a necessary corollary of egoism,—the foundation of the structure of society must be changed in order to free it from the tyranny of Communalism. This can only come by the advent of what Dr. Tagore calls the "Spiritual State", in which competitive co-operation will make room for co-operation based upon the conviction that all men are born free and equal, that the image of God was not separately cut in ebony and oak, but in one universal substance, imbued with the Divine Spirit.

COME MY LOVER.

Come my lover, in thy lavish splendour,
Hurt the wind with shock of thy arrival.
No more secret meetings in uncertain
Gleams of twilight ; let thy burning torches
Toss through midnight their tumultuous laughter.
Grasp me by my right hand ; ah, secure me
From all trivial ties of clinging moments,—
Coils of sluggish dreams ; and let all sleepers
Wake and come, and see me glad and helpless,
Held in might of thy majestic silence.

RABINDRANATH.

"CALLS FROM THE EAST."

By PROF. FERNAND BENOIT.

The *Cahiers du Mois*, a monthly publication started last year by the Paris publisher Emile-Paul, instead of the usual bunch of poems, stories and essays produced by other periodicals, brings out, under the direction of F. and A. Berge, connected sets of notes or studies, on themes proposed by the Editors, contributed by various writers from their respective points of view. The interest of this sort of collective interview by correspondence lies in the variety, the contrast, of the views thus brought together, which nevertheless form a harmonious whole.

The subject matter of the enquiry, which will occupy us to-day, and whose results appeared in the last number, No. 9/10, of the *Cahiers du Mois*, under the title of "Calls from the East", consists of replies to five questions put by the Editors.

I do not know whether the East is actually calling out to the West, offering sympathy and inspiration. What is certain is, that an increasing number of individuals of the West, and sometimes even institutions, hear the voice of the East, dream ardently of the East as of a land of wisdom and bliss, where other modes of life, other disciplines of thought, and other religious experiments are carried on, which might serve to rescue them from their growing mental and spiritual perplexities. These calls are heard not only by idle dreamers, or amateurs of new sensations, dissatisfied with their own surroundings because they are not at peace with themselves, but frequently also by 'others'.

But I had better put before you the five items of the questionnaire sent by Messrs. Berge to some hundred members of the French cultivated class, and a few foreigners, mainly orientalists, philosophers, sociologists, men and women of letters, artists, critics, travellers, explorers. Till now the East has co-operated with the West in the same way as the sheep co-operates with the fleece-dealer and the butcher. These questions at least show that it is not in that aspect that our enquiry is considering this collaboration of the two worlds,

The questions were :—

1. Do you think that West and East are completely impenetrable to each other, or at least, to use Maeterlinck's phrase, that there are in the human brain an Occidental and an Oriental lobe, which have always mutually paralysed such effort?

2. If we are penetrable by Oriental influence, who are the interpreters—Germanic, Slavonic, Asiatic—through which this action seems to you to exercise itself most efficiently in France?

3. Are you, with M. Henri Massis, of opinion that this influence of the Orient could constitute for French thinking and arts a serious danger that we ought urgently to resist ; or do you think that the liquidation of the Mediterranean influence has set in, and, that we could, like Germany, try and find in the *Knowledge of the East** an enrichment of our own general culture and a renewal of our sensibility?

4. What is the field—art, letters, philosophy—in which this influence seems likely to give peculiarly fruitful results?

5. Which are, according to your feeling, the Western values that make for the supremacy of the West over the East ; or what are, in your opinion, the false values which belittle our Western civilisation?

It would be no easy task to expound and discuss, within the space of an article, the opinions developed in a volume of some four hundred pages. I shall therefore limit myself to delineating the general tendency of the views expressed, by typical quotations. The list of the contributors does not include the name of a single politician.

When the book fell into my hands I was prepared for a somewhat biassed handling of the topic. In no country, except perhaps Germany, have the cultivated classes been affected by the war as in France. Many who were counted, before the crisis, among the wide-minded have become exclusive. As for the exclusive—I am talking of the majority,—they did not lose such a chance of becoming narrow-minded.

The first two essays, contributed by two of the foremost French Orientalists, Emile S  nart and Sylvain Levi, rather confirmed my apprehensions. The tone of extreme reserve and caution adopted by these learned authors may be the best for

*Title of a book on the East by the poet, Paul Claudel.

scholars, attacking scholarly problems from a scholarly point of view; but it does not seem to me to be likely to facilitate a human understanding between the Eastern and Western worlds.

"Is it certain," asks Prof. Senart, "that the incessant penetration, ill-controlled by settled judgment, the growing invasion of Oriental life will not complicate the threatening unrest of the Western world?" That the intended enrichment of the one culture by means of imported elements of the other, has to be carried on with judiciousness and care is obvious. Everybody knows, for instance, how far the interested advances of the conciliatory missionary or the condescending statesman can be relied upon. Of little more avail are the rhapsodic outbursts of novelists in search of exotic sensations. But when the great Indologist asks: "Do you find that any one of the Eastern civilisations has to offer us any essential element that ours does not, or did not possess?" and adds: "I do not think our culture has any chance of vivifying it (the East) by the supply of its impaired elements"; concluding with: "It (our western civilisation) will find there new resources of adornment but I think, no ferments of renewal. In the case of French civilisation being threatened with collapse, no Oriental importation could avert the peril";—we cannot help thinking of the Western 'Renaissance',—of Europe's sudden revival under the stimulus of elements imported individually from the East,—and feel inclined to see in Prof. Sénart's reserves the perplexities of an overcautious specialist.

We shall now go on to the article signed by Prof. Sylvain Levi, the first of our Visiting Professors (he even inaugurated the *Visva-bharati* in December, 1921). He admits that "the mad pride of Europe, over-excited by a century of admirable inventions, pretends to impose its law on the rest of the world—the East, undermined in its beliefs, customs, institutions—the East which is trying to organise itself for defence.... And never has the earth borne so much hatred as in the time of the League of Nations. It is the genius (the evil genius) of Europe which is making the unity of Asia.... Therefore what is the good of talking about dosing influences by the drop-tube and the phial? We have either to understand one another, or throttle

Leon Brunschvig of the "Institute".

The Western man, the man according to Socrates and Descartes,—a type of which the West has provided, by the way, very few examples,—is the man who includes all mankind in his idea of intellectual reflection and moral unity. Nothing is more desirable for him than the knowledge of the Orient, of all the Orient with the almost infinite diversity of its epochs and civilisations..... "The Mediterranean values" which were predominant in Jerusalem, Byzantium, Rome, Cordova, successively, are of Asiatic origin and character. So that a return to the East would be an attempt to rejuvenate and renew, at least from outside, the Oriental fund of the said values, rather than to liquidate them.

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Paul Valery.

From the standpoint of culture I do not think we can have much to fear just now from Oriental influence. It is not a new thing for us. It has given us all the beginnings of our arts and knowledge.

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André Gide.

Desirable or not, the contact of these two civilisations is inevitable. They are destined to penetrate deeply into each other.... The Occident must not forget that its civilisation is not the only one.

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Edmond Jaloux.

To tell you the truth I am always surprised to see that the defenders of this French spirit, of this our Occidental patrimony, have so little trust in themselves..... As for me, I think it possesses enough vigour, and can hardly admit of a culture that would enrich itself by means of refusals, or that certain elements it assimilated centuries ago could retain an eternal capacity for renewal and self-fecundation..... From Asia we ignore almost everything, its history, literature, philosophy..... But we must recognise that a very queer process is at work which we might call the 'dispiritualisation' of Europe..... The trust we had put in the machine is turning against us.....the inner man yields to the outer man ; the outer man himself delegates all his powers to an inert system of wheels and motors. A peculiar madness, born of the abuse of money and the abuse of needs, increases this moral disorder which will fatally drag Europe into the abyss. We might have thought that the war of 1914, whose real

cause lay in this increasing greed, would teach us a lesson and that, being in search of a remedy for his troubles, the European would not seek for it in their very aggravation. But, since the war, all the causes of disaster have increased.

If we consider the philosophy of the races of Asia in its general outlook, the first thing that will strike us is the importance it gives to the spiritual..... What these religions, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc., have in common, is a deep belief in the inner man and the importance of his connection with the Divine..... The wisdom of these religions consisted precisely in not granting man all the satisfactions he craved for, and reminding him that he must rise in function of his spirit, not of his possessions..... But is there some danger in promoting the Eastern influence? For my own part, the only result I can conceive, as the outcome of a contact with the sages of Asia, is new enrichment..... Some say that this doctrine (Buddhism) finds its origin in the most terrible pessimism. Well, there is no pessimism in Buddhism in the sense we give to that word. It was Schopenhauer who manufactured pessimism out of the Buddhistic doctrine, because he was an Occidental.

Man does not live by bread alone, says the Gospel. But he does not live, either, by his needs, work, capital, ambition, power, his modifications of or relations with external nature. He lives, or must live, precisely on that something which Asiatic philosophy offers to him in progression. For the three-fourths of the men of this age, Christianity has been either a system of rites in which the majority of the adherents do not any longer see a deep meaning (Catholicism), or a regulation of the outer life without connection with the faith (Protestantism)..... We must not forget that Christianity is, speaking generally, an Oriental religion, already influenced by the Buddha ; it not only conquered Europe but introduced a superior civilisation into that continent..... The most vital part of Christianity is after all this teaching that originated in the East, and not what Roman legislators and their juridic genius superadded..... Since centuries of our history, the East has never ceased to send us, at more and more distant intervals, messages to recall us to a right and pure sense of life..... When we have to judge of all these things, we must not forget that Europe is gravely ill, ill from the very excess of her materialism..... We see now, after the great experiment of the Nineteenth Century, that man can hardly live without the Divine..... Whatever god is to be born or reborn, he

will not be able to exist without drawing a part of his strength from the teaching of Asia.

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Jean Schlumberger.

The virtue of Europe is action, that of Asia contemplation. Europe has invented the autonomous individual, the man with co-ordinated ideas, insatiable in the conquest of the real world, but lukewarm with regard to the spiritual. She is so little fruitful in sympathy that she seems unable to produce a religious movement without the interference of some outer graft. Never till now have appeared so obviously the sterile fruits of a civilisation exclusively turned towards the domination of matter, and never before had the Oriental civilisations revealed themselves to us as our equals. The terrific folly of the war was necessary to make us acknowledge these two facts.....There is no hope that Asia will ever accept the positive values of the Christian world if, on her part, Europe does not recognise the Asiatic values. Such understanding can only be reciprocal ; it must be based on mutual respect.

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Robert de Traz.

There is not only curiosity in the glances that we direct towards the East, but also anxiety,—the anxiety of people who feel at one and the same time both crammed and impoverished,—crammed with ideas, inventions, technical progress ; and impoverished by the terrible modern deterioration.

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Philippe Soupault.

We shall never be able to judge the West. We shall either be too severe or too indulgent. What we can confess with certitude needs no commentary : the disastrous result of its influence. All the present unrest comes from the supremacy of this European spirit.....This immense, this prodigious and unqualifiable vanity (of ours) is the insuperable barrier set up between East and West. It is no wonder therefore that the recent years, which were for us years of humiliation and taught us the weakness and wretchedness of Western civilisation, were also years when certain Westerners turned towards the East. Like a great sick body Europe has been turning on her couch, calling for help ; she wants for her weakened, demoralised spirit, a light.

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Jean Caves.

But is really the influence of Asia so pernicious and its charm so poisonous?.....The truth is, that Amiel and Schopenhauer have deformed some of the Hindoo ideas..... Amiel has understood nothing of the Indian thought and his example proves nothing.....India never preached discouragement and pessimism.....“It is not action that we must renounce, but the fruit of action!” Says Krishna. “Tear out that poisoned arrow, *indolence*,” says Buddha. *Nirvāna* is for them (Schopenhauer, etc.) nothingness, *i.e.*, all that is most frightful for us even when we despair. Now, *Nirvāna* never meant anything of the kind, as everybody knows or ought to know..... In the midst of this intellectual nihilism in which we struggle since the war, the knowledge of this Oriental wisdom will perhaps bring back to some of us the serenity which seemed to have been lost for ever.

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René Crevel.

I am surprised to see that the dabblers in “peril” should have selected an Oriental one..... The real peril comes from America, together with the manias for speed, drinks, gramophones. The peril does not come from the East!

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André Desson, André Harlaire.

From different parts we hear voices asserting the existence of labels of value either strictly Occidental or strictly Oriental. Greco-Latin influences and the renaissance had put us under the spell of the so-called ‘Mediterranean values’.....to-day we have attained European values..... are we not on the way towards universal values?

*

Gabriel Audisio.

The influence of Asia, if it were to become predominant in our land, should be realised through a strong personality, both literary and social, like Tolstoi..... This prophet,—is it going to be Tagore? His spell is powerful. If, on the one hand, he judges the West severely, on the other he does not shrink from collaborating with it.—Or is it to be Mahatma Gandhi? But Gandhi does not directly act upon us; and, introduced by Romain Rolland, he still remains an object of curiosity. This hostility of the two lobes of the brain imagined by Maeterlinck is but a poor image. The incompatibility of two fragments of mankind reduces itself, after all,

to the age-long struggle of two tendencies, idealism and utilitarianism..... Why should they not co-exist?..... Let us therefore accept, with an Oriental courtesy, these exchanges.

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J. Bacot.

Those who know the men and countries of the East and the Far-East, both by culture and experience, are exceptions. Moreover, only to know is not to understand, for to understand these things you have to approach them with sympathy. The East has of us a much clearer idea,—not that these people are very keen on knowing us, but the Whites are much more penetrable..... The Whites are all one, and if they throttle one another it is because brothers who hate each other do so more thoroughly than strangers..... The Oriental people know quite well the evangelic teaching through the innumerable gospels which Anglo-saxon missionaries throw about among them like commercial prospectuses. Now they have seen that when two Christian nations get hold of each other's throat, they fight with such blind ferocity that each one accepts it as a duty to perish, provided that the other perishes too. Such an expression of animality is intolerable to the more ancient civilisations. In their own countries the Orientals have seen our missionaries of different nationalities separated by their political conflict, the pursuit of the same ideal being for them a weaker bond than distant debates about frontiers. Our outer activities are all the more unpleasant to the Oriental because they strike him as mere hypocrisy..... This curious sincerity of the West—which is after all only unconscious dishonesty—is for Asia extremely trying. There is more unconsciousness than duplicity in it, which makes it all the more disconcerting. What can you do with people who are convinced that they are looting you for your own benefit? From a close contact between the East and the West nothing can result but a threat for the East, without any hope of remedy for us. If we go on adding to our more and more efficient means of harming others, more and more powerful motives for doing so,—e.g., the exaggerated feeling of Nationality, the sad European legacy of the French revolution,—then it is not impossible to believe that the White Race has in consequence of an organic law, undertaken its own destruction. And it is sure that from a certain standpoint, that of the coloured races, it could not possibly do anything better. That would spare them the trouble of modifying their teachings in order to resist ours.

An attentive study of the Orient as it was till now—not of to-day's

Orient as we have contaminated it—would soothe our agitation and thus our morbid irritability between nation and nation. As long as an ideal has not as an object the control of all the passions whatever they be, without any reserve, or compromise with any individual or collective egoism, morals must be relative and subordinate to more intense interests, and material progress can end only in the destruction of men and things... The impulsive European acts much and thinks little. Most often the statesman has just time to pass from one course of action to another; he leaves it to the historian to think for him after he has acted. This is the reason why history is in such favour in the West..... "To do anything rather than not to act!"—this anything is most often irreparable. This method when generalised leads to an efficient irresponsibility..... I am convinced that we can understand antiquity only through the Oriental channel..... There are no more critical minds than the Oriental ones, but they are critical in a sense different from ours. Our analysis is a decomposition into elements or parts. Their's a research for knowledge of the essential and objective nature of things, which does not make a quantitative but a qualitative distinction. In the field of letters, it is still too early for a direct influence from one literature to another. It is in philosophy that the Oriental influence could mostly modify our habits of mind..... The relative immutability of the East is a sufficient presumption of its wisdom and equilibrium. One changes only when one is not satisfied. Our instability shows that we are only replacing one evil by another, since we never can stop at any moment of our evolution.

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Serge Elisseev.

(Ex-Prof. of Oriental Languages, Petrograd University.)

The East is impenetrable to the West only for the man who deliberately refuses to get rid of certain ideas which, like armour, prevent him from bending to enter the low Japanese door or squat on the mat..... I regret that in the spiritual field, the philosophical and moral ideas of the Far-East exercise but such a superficial influence over us. The teaching of the great thinkers (and not of any random Indian whom enthusiastic theosophists put up as an enlightened *Yogi*) could spiritually enrich the European soul. The habit of contemplation, if only for five minutes a day, would make for more mental concentration and strengthen our will by lessening our nervousness which makes us very unstable and prevents the formation of great character, a thing which is getting rarer and rarer in Europe..... In the course of its history the European civilisation has

lost most of its spiritual values. It can no longer recover them, though it still realises their necessity. For the best of men cannot exist simply on the ideal of 'efficiency of work' in the American way. In the condition in which the West finds itself, it is easier for us to go and search for truths in the East, than to come back to the few values we have left in the course of the development of our civilisation.

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Azuan Mammeri

(A well-known Tunisian painter).

Can we deny to-day the influence of the East over all the European Middle-age? While the crusaders were fighting their religious opponents, were they not struck by admiration for a civilisation they had ignored till then?..... The Western brain brought in contact with it certainly did not lose anything..... It is not because the East has undergone a long decay that one can deny the impulse it gave to human progress..... There is in every man a desire for learning, understanding, expression..... This need manifests itself with ampleness in generous minds, with narrowness in mean minds. But what do we see to-day? A kind of intellectual selfishness even in cultivated minds. This comes mainly from the assumed superiority of Europe. Does the West really show superiority over the East? The European is active, laborious, orderly..... during centuries he has studied the conditions of comfort in the most variegated ways and has won for himself most important commodities..... But it seems that the great moral ideas have taken birth in the East, the cradle of religions..... Their family and society are more firmly constituted..... Be it Hindu, Buddhist, Mussalman, the Oriental community is calm, active without force, patriarchal, sometimes indolent, but helpful, devoted, hospitable and generous. Acts of violence are repugnant to them. The latest Oriental revolutionaries are only the consequences of Occidental influences over the people among whom they occurred.

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Grevais Courtellemont.

The voluptuous Greek mythology is but a very poor (and how unmoral) reflexion of the metaphysics of India and Egypt..... Ceylon was illuminated by its new Buddhist efflorescence..... In Spain the Arabic civilisation, heir to the Greek, was ascending..... Was that not all Orient?

And had it not taken up the torch of civilization at a time when Europe was yet in the barbarous stage?..... Then the Crusades ;.....on the side of Europe was then all barbarity, on that of the East, civilisation and beauty. The clash was atrocious.....the East shed tears of blood,..... the West polished and enriched itself. But from that day a mutual misunderstanding started. India first learned to know the West through the pirates on her coasts ; China and Japan from sea-robbers and plunderers. The sinister exploits of the Spanish *conquistadores* in the two Americas, the European colonial ambitions which continued to grow,—all this changed the mistrust of the East into hatred and contempt..... Of all this the West itself would realise but little, were it not for such men as Funck-Brentano, Loti, Farrere and Grousset, who have led us on the nobleness of feeling and purity of thought of these (Eastern) men, so long calumniated by such men as Barres, Louis Bertrand and so many other infatuated fools of the school of Gobineau and others.

The Mediterranean liquidation has begun..... Europe listens to the voice of Tagore..... When the misunderstanding which still separates us from the Orient has vanished, these men will open their hearts to us as we shall open our arms to them. This is what we must realise, and not the insane West. It can become a benefit by making us conscious of the great feverishness of our life, by bringing us back to the joy of living. After Loti, etc., others will follow who will tell us of the new consciousness of Japan, the awakening of China, the resurrection of Turkey, the final liberation of Egypt and that of India which is to follow..... Animated with the same desire of fusion, concord, harmony, East and West will not be long in uniting in the feeling of brotherhood which should always have existed between them. "Dream ! Utopia !" —the sceptic will exclaim. Not at all ! The whole world is moving rapidly towards this 'Union of the Peoples' which will be the salvation of mankind. An era of greater social justice opens everywhere on the globe. A dawn is breaking. And the warm sun of the East which begets so many wonders will shine again on this new day. The East which watched the birth of the first civilisations, which was the cradle of the great religions of mankind, will soon become the necessary counterpart of our too exclusively technical civilisation, by making us recall the real moral values that so many false values have temporarily eclipsed amongst us.

This is all that Tagore says.

The reader may have by this time grown tired of such a long series of variations on the same tune. Still we shall go on with them for a while, because we realise the importance of such numerous and unanimous testimonies, collected from among the cultivated class of a nation whom we thought to be so deeply obsessed with its nationalism, that its traditional sense of justice, its liberal traditions, seemed blurred. At a time when a Stoddard is promoting his wild theories of Nordic superiority, which find their immediate application in laws of exclusion, and seek to justify the unlimited colonial appetites, is it not of some interest to hear a negligible part of the *élite* of France proclaim their belief in the collaboration of races, the co-operation of cultures, and confess the shortcomings of their own patrimony? Such views might perhaps be gathered elsewhere (in Germany for instance) in equal proportion, and we do not reproduce them here to emphasise the magnanimity of the particular nation in question. It is rather to show that our Visva-bharati ideal is not quite unknown in Europe. If there are 'Calls from the East' there is also response from the West.

Dr. Allendy

The East had already strongly influenced the West at the time of the great Greek philosophers.....it is probable that its influence will again operate in the future..... In my opinion the most fruitful contact will be between India and the French elements that are more closely related to the Aryan stock, *i.e.*, the Celtic substratum of the nation whose psychological orientation, unlike the Latin one, has always been speculative..... I think that for philosophy and science there will be a return to the great general ideas in conformity with the intuitive metaphysics as personified in the East..... The force of the West is its intensive labour and its effort of material realisation, but it suffers from this prosaic tendency which is still darkened by a merciless struggle for life..... East and West can win much more by a more intimate frequentation, and I would like to see the study of Greek replaced in our colleges by that of Sanskrit.

*

Irving Babbit, U.S.A.

I do not think that Orient and Occident are impenetrable to one another ; they rather supplement each other. There are times when the

West needs Orientation in the liberal sense of the word. Our epoch is one of these. I mistrust the Germanic and Slavonic interpreters. The best interpreters are either Frenchmen who know the East by experience, or cultivated Orientals who have a sufficient knowledge of the Occident. The Oriental influence will be felt more in a very healthy way in the fields of religion and philosophy..... The special virtue of the East has always been the religious meditation..... This element has entirely disappeared from the West, leaving room for a more and more feverish agitation.....or has been confounded with the pantheistic dream..... The great superiority of the West lies in the field of natural sciences and in the material organisation of life. Unfortunately Science has been idolised.

*

Henri Barbusse

This penetration of spirit and culture of the two halves of the old world has already been often realised in the course of history..... It is always very advantageous for civilisations and states of mind to penetrate one another..... Mental and spiritual enrichment can be bought but at that price.

*

Victor Barrucand

I believe in the unity and the diversity of the human block..... Arts were only born in Europe through the influence of the East. If the French art and thinking could see in the Oriental influence a grave peril that has to be urgently removed, it would mean that they entertain such doubts about themselves and their own vitality that one could believe them to be more sickly than they are..... The West, which has been wrecked in its activism, will only recover calmness and the secret of happiness in a submission to the impulse of love. America is more threatening than Asia. Left to itself the West will tear itself widely, in spite of all morals and brotherhood, for progress is a war-machine which cannot be managed by fools. Man must govern the machine, not be governed by it.

*

Alice Barthou

(Wife of the late Premier).

The West means for me mist, cold, mechanism, murderous science, the factories with all the vices, the triumph of work, bustle, ugliness, materialism, utilitarianism, sterile agitation.....The East is calmness, peace, beauty, colour, mystery, charm, sunshine, joy, sweet life

and dream, in a word all the contrary of our hateful and grotesque civilisation..... If I were free I would get a Chinese wall to be built between the East and the West so as to prevent the former being poisoned by the latter.

*

Paul Bertrand

The West in all times received the vivifying influence of the East. Hellenism was for Rome an Oriental influence. So was Christianity. So was, in the middle age, the valuable Mahommedan influence..... The only superiority of the West was supplied by the Greeks,—it is Geometry. As for pseudo-values which belittle our civilisation it would require a volume to enumerate them. The strength of the Orient, of India specially, lies in the importance they assign to the religious problem.

*

Jean Buhot

(Of the "Association des Amis de l' Orient.")

The more I study the East the less I see it different from the West in all that is important and fundamental. From one country to another, only the prejudices differ. To assert that two parts of mankind shall never succeed in understanding each other, is to put our prejudices before common sense and a sincere search for truth, which of course many people do. Our religion, worse than if it did not exist, is a partner in all our crimes. Our philanthropy is not sufficient to remove the suspicion of hypocrisy. It is not surprising at all that the West is despised for its ideals, shunned for its deeds and envied for its material power..... I believe that Rome, and also Italy, with their free spirit, if not a very open one, are eminently liable to be benefited by Oriental influence without the help of any Germanic or Slavic intermediary..... I would like the great masterpieces of India to be as well known among us as those of Greece, they respond to our sensibility better than the latter. It is by disinterested study on a high plane that France can approach the East, and find there an enrichment of her intellectual patrimony..... I must confess that the East when she wants to come to us chooses very different ways. She throws herself (and with what candid confidence!) on applied science. Even some of these modern religious movements are deeply tinted with Anglo-saxon protestantism..... In one word, the East, when she wants to progress, Americanizes herself.

*

Marcel Cahen

The East worships the inner life, the West on the contrary is almost exclusively attached to the outer manifestation of life..... The East is spirit, the West matter. What danger can there be in learning to know the East? Is it a danger to enrich oneself? Once already, the Arabs, (*i.e.*, the East) fecundated the Mediterranean mind. What was the result? The Cathedrals! Then was destroyed Byzantism which endlessly discussed the letter, classified, divided.....Art, letters, philosophy,—all have been influenced by the East and also especially science.....The East is all synthesis.....To the spiritual and intellectual anarchy of our times, it offers a loving co-operation ; it is all tolerance and trust.

*

Paul Claudel

Are the East and West completely impenetrable to one another? By no means ; man is the same everywhere. The interpreters? Go to the sources. Is there a danger? Not at all. It is never an evil to know oneself. Can we find in the knowledge of the East an enrichment of our culture? Yes. In what field,—art, letters, philosophy? In all three. What values make the superiority of the West? Uniquely Christianity.*

*

E. Dinet and Sliman ben Ibrahim.

Maeterlinck should logically sub-divide his first lobe into a certain number of irreconcilable lobules,—a French one, an English one, a German one, a Russian one, etc. The proof of their discordance has been shown in the awfulest way the world has ever seen..... More than any other nation, France is penetrable to Oriental influence, thanks to her wide-mindedness..... M. Henri Massis' crusade is a very dangerous outburst of medieval fanaticism..... In all fields, Oriental influence could bring extremely fruitful results, if it were intelligently utilised. To those who would tell us, with a shrug of their shoulders, that a palm tree cannot be grafted on an apple tree, we answer that man possesses a power of adaptation unknown in the vegetable world. Never has any civilisation been rejuvenated otherwise than by the grafting of alien elements. All those which, seeking for regeneration, came back to their primeval sources, only accelerated their own decay..... As the Arabic proverb says : *a single hand cannot applaud.*

*

*By Christianity Claudel means strictly Roman Catholicism.

Fernand Divoire

The West and the East remain two separate worlds because their activities have not the same goals. Ours is to rush about like wasps in a bottle, to create machines and speed ; theirs is to reach wisdom, often through immortality.

*

Alexandre Embiricos

It was the interpenetration of East and West which made civilisation. Civilisation, though it may appear to-day as a specially Occidental creation, would not be what it is without Asia's tribute. The East fecundated the West.....The West which possesses conscious intelligence never had the deep dreams of Asia..... If Asia has shaken off her slumber, it is because the West has penetrated her.....The oldest Asiatic races become young nations..... The most Europeanised of them are our most redoubtable enemies.....But let us be reassured ; civilisation would not perish if the West lost its supremacy.

*

Claude Farrère.

Maeterlinck, a purely Western man of genius, understands of course nothing of the East. His opinion is therefore negligible. We Frenchmen are easily penetrable by Oriental influences, if you mean by the Orient, Turkey, India, China. If you mean the nearer East,—Russia, Germany,—we are on the contrary absolutely impenetrable. I have not the honour to know M. Henri Massis but I think the preceding answer is sufficient, as it was necessary. The Chinese influence would be very useful to us in the philosophic field.

*

René Gillouin.

It seems beyond dispute that if the West is much more advanced than the East in the knowledge and mastership of the material universe, the East is much more advanced in the mastership and knowledge of the spiritual world, or at least of the region of that world which is accessible to man's intelligence and will..... If a synthesis of the positive values of the East and West is possible and desirable, as I believe it is, I think that the French, mind would be much more apt than the Slavic or Germanic mind to deal with the distinctions, eliminations, and compositions, necessary to this object.

*

René Guénon.

If Westerners do not understand anything of the East, it is solely the effect of a certain mental deviation which characterises modern civilisation. There is only one remedy, to bring back the West to the real intellectuality whose notion it has lost. There is no possibility of harmony with the East outside this condition. On the other hand, if the Westerners recover the knowledge of the true principles, the agreement will come by itself..... Germans and even Russians are certainly, together with the Anglo-saxons, the least apt to grasp the Oriental mentality. One would certainly find more favourable elements in the so-called Latin peoples..... It is in this field (arts and literature) that really profitable results can be expected..... As to philosophy it is nothing but an exclusively Occidental point of view, which by reason of the narrow limits inherent in it, and the prejudices it implies, can be but an obstacle to the understanding of Oriental thought as well as of anything else that does not fall within its scope..... The erudite research work done by Orientalists is also without any import, and useless to foster this understanding, if not directly harmful by the many misinterpretations it spreads.

The West only enjoys a material superiority which nobody envies it..... If a meeting is to take place, it is not for the East to make advances, it is in the West that an essential change should first take place. Besides, since the West is far more interested than the East in such a junction, it is for the former to show proofs of that good will without which no efficient action could be possible. You do not save a patient who does not want to be cured. The most terrible thing is that the West is enjoying its disease, and far from acknowledging it, boasts of it as a superiority.

*

Myriam Harry.

Not only do I not think that the East and the West are impenetrable but I find that they complete each other with cadence and harmony.

Firstly, does not Europe owe anything to Asia?..... Our futility, our indecency, our easy-goingness scandalize the East. And I believe that, with regard to decency, we have everything to win from a *rapprochement* with the peoples from beyond the sea (Mediterranean).

*

René Jouglet.

What Orient do you mean? The Orient of to-day, or the one of

before the Russo-Japanese War? The Asia as it is to-day or the Asia of Tagore and Gandhi?..... The truth is that the European civilisation of the twentieth century in its utilitarian form is spreading rapidly over Asia. It means that while you are trying to unite with a discipline which made India what it is, the greatest part of Asia is engaged in re-modelling itself on Europe.

*

Jacques de Lacretelle.

That a mind should refuse to enrich itself, repel what it does not know, lest it could become dangerous for that which it knows, seems to me to be a doctrine worthy only of the monks and scientists of the middle ages.

*

René Lalou.

The call of the East is an irresistible wind, but only one of the many which solicit us. It is as useful as the others are. Let us no longer speak of danger : as far as thought is concerned at least, it is generosity which succeeds and avarice that fails.

*

Marquis-de-Lamazetière.

One cannot say that there are two civilisations—the European and the Asiatic—opposed to each other. If you go from West to East you find successively the European civilisations very orientalized in the East ; two Eurasian civilisations, the Russian, and the Mussalman ; a quasi-Eurasian civilisation, that of India, which the Persian, Greek Mussalman and British conquests have successively influenced ; finally the extreme Eastern civilisation, which is undergoing more and more the influence of American civilisation, so different from the European.

One can only say that one civilisation has had an action on another when it changes or at least modifies its laws, customs, or modes of thinking and feeling. Asia has not yet exercised such an action on Europe..... The supremacy of the Western civilisation lies in its sense of individualism which brought about scientific discoveries..... But this individualism has caused the West to lose its sense of solidarity.

*

Maurice Maeterlinck.

My oriental love has much to tell you, but the occidental one, pressed by work has not the leisure to make out just now what his colleague of the rising sun dictates to him.

Paul Masson-Oursel.

The reciprocal impenetrability of East and West is a prejudice ardently cultivated within the two cultures by the mystic and the traditionalist..... France is a personality not an abstract method. She will receive the Oriental influence in accordance with her traditions..... The influence of Asia on our art, literature, thinking will increase more and more..... One merit of Westerners is that they are 'disinterestedly interested' in natural science..... Their shame is the idolatry of strength and the oblivion of spiritual values.

*

A. Meillet.

The opposition made between the East and the West seems to me inaccurate. Nothing is more different from the rationalistic civilisation of France, than for instance the puritan spirit of the English. As in the East, nothing is more dissimilar from India than China.

Why interpretation? There is no people which has done more to know the East than ours..... A civilisation with such marked features as ours, runs no risks in widening its horizon. As for art, Oriental influence has been at work with us for a long time.

The value of our civilisation is exclusively intellectual.

*

Paul Oltramare.

(Prof. University of Geneva.)

I neither think that Indian thinking is impenetrable to us, nor that ours is impenetrable to them. It is quite true that the surroundings and history have gradually deeply differentiated East and West. But the former have cultivated only intellectual habits..... A man enriches himself by the knowledge he acquires of other men, however different from him they may be, perhaps all the more when they are more different..... The Oriental shows more wisdom than the Occidental because he is not so easily captured by things of little or no value.

*

André Seigfried.

The East and the West can, I think, understand each other by the intellect. But either of them remains most often incapable of feeling the standpoint of the other. Therefrom arises the principal cause of misunderstanding between the two, and there is scarcely a remedy to be found for

that. However, there are in the West people who feel in the European way and *vice-versa*.....It is through them that the contact can be established..... We forget too often that the source of Christianity is oriental..... But Jesus who used to say: "My kingdom is not of this world", would hardly recognise the men of the West as his disciples.

*

Franz Toussaint.

We are penetrable to our Oriental influence. The interpreter has been, is, and will be the Asiatic..... We must get an abundant share of the Oriental treasure. *Ex oriente lux!* Our culture will be enriched, and our means of expression renovated. The results will be excellent in the field of life, because this influence will abolish the idea of progress. Also, then, in the fields of art and literature. Allow me to think that the greatest poets of all times are Indians, Chinese, Japanese. As for philosophy, it is as futile in the East as in the West..... In my opinion the West has no superiority whatever over the East.

*

Léon Werth.

Are the East and the West impenetrable to each other? I think that in the East, as in the West, there are brains which nothing can penetrate.

*

Romain Rolland.

Where Henri Massis is, Romain Rolland cannot be.

* * *

Our conclusion is that, judging from the views of so many authorised representatives of European thought, the "Calls from the East" find in the West a response. We even venture to say that they testify to the existence of a tacit understanding, or at least of a sincere desire for collaboration and union, which had remained on the whole unspoken till now.

The "Nordists" may therefore go on boasting of their self-assumed superiority. This will not hamper for ever the irresistible, though sometimes unconscious, will for human co-operation. We have felt it our duty to bring before the eyes of the Visva-bharati workers documents and facts which justify this expectation.

THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA.

By PROF. HARIDAS BHATTACHARYA.

That all moral action has an effect in a realm other than the physical is not a peculiar conviction of the Hindu mind alone, for in all ages and in all climes this has been used as an argument for morality and religion. But to the treatment of this problem on a metaphysical basis it was reserved for Indian thinkers to bring the wealth of their copious imagination and their keen intellect; and creeds that differ from one another in all conceivable ways are still at one so far as the treatment of this problem is concerned.

The ancient thinkers of India proposed to themselves the task of ascertaining the nature of moral action, its effect in the visible and the invisible world, the mode in which the individual has to be conceived if he is to enjoy the fruits of his actions, and also whether it is possible to transcend the domain of action altogether. As, in their belief, the world was the scene of moral activity and enjoyment of the fruits of action (especially bad ones) the problem of *karma* and of existence were more or less inseparable.

The joyous enjoyment of life which characterised the Vedic hymns was toned down considerably in the time of the Upanishads and was replaced, later still, by a sense of world weariness which made the identification of action and existence a perfectly easy process. We therefore find that the problem of good and evil is discussed in connection with existence in its fourfold aspect of *hēya* (Lit. that which ought to be abandoned) or suffering from worldly existence, *hēyahētu* or the cause of that suffering (here the doctrine of Karma is discussed), *hāna* or destruction of suffering, and *hānopāya* or means of such destruction. From very early times all speculation was intensely coloured by this practical motive and all theory of reality had to show, not only that the world conformed to it, but that also it led to salvation; hence along with object (*vishaya*) and the

requisite qualification (*adhikāra*) of philosophical speculation the questions of purpose (*prayōjana*) which is salvation, and relation (*sambandha*) between the philosophy taught and that purpose, were also discussed.

The history of religious thought in India is a history of the conflict between form and substance, expression and intention, of a moral action. In spite of the fact that all through this long history the main trend of speculation has been, on the whole, on the side of substance, formalism had a tendency to possess the unthinking portion of the people owing to a variety of reasons. The main difficulty was linguistic, especially on account of the peculiar theory of sound upheld by the Hindus from a very early time. The gods had to be approached in certain definite ways through the language of the gods (*gārvānavānī*), viz. Sanskrit, and only a faultless use of that language could unlock the heart of the gods and the gate of heaven.

The effect was a tyranny of repetition which clogged free thought in religious matters, and introduced a number of set prayers, hard and fast formulæ, and stereotyped practices into the everyday religious life of the people, from which arose mystic faith allied to blind superstition, soulless repetition allied to hypocrisy, or open revolt against the whole Brahmanic creed, according to education, temperament and time. But the better minds of India were never for a moment deluded by ritualism, and all through the centuries we find successive religious reforms which attacked this or that aspect of the ritualistic creed and called people back to the true element in religion. Daring innovations in thought and faith, which would have produced bloodshed in other lands, were allowed in India, because they were never absent at any time. Atheists and heretics flourished side by side, with the devout and the orthodox, and though there were bitter polemics on either side, the means adopted was argument, not arms. Rulers patronised diverse creeds and in fact encouraged the meeting of people of different opinions. Defection from the ranks of the ritualists must have occurred pretty frequently, but within the limits of society freedom was never opposed. It was only when a

particular religion was openly renounced that social intercourse ceased, but not therefore dialectical intercourse.

The existence of a class of keen-witted free thinkers by their side kept the ritualists all along busy devising new arguments in justification of their practices, and we find that some of the astute members of that brotherhood did not shrink from interpreting them allegorically, just as they do now. What the Brahmans themselves did, by way of attack, at the time of the Aranyakas and the Upanishads was done in later times also by other castes, and a glance at the mediæval saints of India will show that they belong to all castes and all ranks. It speaks highly of the intellectual ability of the average Indian that even in a priest-ridden country he did not lose the capacity of appreciating rational conduct and cogent argument advocated by persons of any caste. Some of the mediæval saints were accounted low class men—a weaver, or a cobbler, for instance,—and yet their protests against formalism were not only heard but disseminated by their followers. In this way, some became founders of sects that still live and claim thousands of adherents.

This is partly due to the fact that, in India, corporate worship had feeble sway (although many sacrifices required a large number of priests with definite functions) and society allowed its members to please themselves in religious matters so long as they did not prove positively anti-social. A polytheistic religion had to allow some option in religious practices as a matter of necessity and the proselytising spirit was never so strong that one felt uncomfortable when his brother's salvation was in danger. It was therefore freely suggested that salvation could be secured in a variety of ways and that all religions could serve as the means; and when duties were apportioned according to caste, it had to be further conceded that conduct could not be uniform in view of the divergence of duties imposed on the various castes.

In connection with ritualistic practices three points are worth noticing. The first is the tendency to sacrifice the spirit to the letter of the shastric injunctions,—a tendency to think that where all external requirements (*e.g.* pronunciation, choice of time, place, men and materials) have been satisfied the moral

result is bound to follow. Thus far sacrifice partook of the nature of magic, as in fact all worship does that believes that the lock of heaven has only one key of set formula to fit it, and that any deviation therefrom means the loss of heaven. The second point worth noticing is the hypothetically imperative character of many sacrificial injunctions. There were undoubtedly many formal practices, daily and seasonal, which every class or caste had to observe for no ostensible benefit. There were *vidhis* and *nishedhas* (positive and negative injunctions) which were enjoined, not because any utility was promised, but because they were directed in the scriptures and non-performance would entail sin.

The third point in connection with the sacrifices was the increasing monopoly of the Brahmanas in matters spiritual. As is inherently probable, the hymns and sacrifices were originally supposed to be spontaneous expressions of spiritual experiences and desires, and, as such, could not be offered through agents and substitutes. The caste system had not probably become very rigid and even the equality of the sexes in hymnal adoration had not been forgotten when the Vedic sacrifices began. But soon after, the Sudras and women shared the same fate in matters sacrificial; caste began to assume rigidity; and the ritual of sacrifice became so lengthy, so technical and overgrown with detail that a special class had to be trained to ensure accuracy. In fact, a division of labour and specialisation must soon have followed even among these specially trained men (for at first the capacious memory of the priests was the only record of the scriptures) and the Ksatriyas, or warrior caste, that shared with the Brahmans the honour of being composers of hymns, performers of sacrifices and repositories of divine wisdom, gave up the art of worship to devote themselves to the task of fighting and government, which became increasingly insistent as the Indo-Aryan settlement became more and more extended and organised; and in this way a separation of Church and State was effected.

A variety of causes however tended to lessen the importance of sacrificial *karma*. The people in general lost touch with most sacrifices through incapacity and ignorance, and to them,

therefore, all sacrifices were only spectacular events, and not spiritual experiences. The gradual encroachment of form upon matter and, together with it, the fact that the priests probably became less qualified and more avaricious as time went on, led to a loss of faith in sacrificial practices, and to the description of gifts to priests as a kind of bondage (*dakshina-bandha*) which acted as an obstacle to liberation. Then again, many sacrifices involved the killing of animals (or even of men) and thoughtful persons began pertinently to ask whether such sacrificial cruelty and murder would not bear their own fruit and render nugatory the good fruits of the sacrifice by itself. The myth about the victims themselves going to heaven as a result of the sacrifice was exploded by the Chārvāka atheists who advised the sacrificer to offer his own father in case he really believed in such short methods of sending to heaven; while the Sāṃkhya rationalists more philosophically argued that evil actions, like good ones, could not fail to produce their own effects if the doctrine of moral causality were true. What again were the results of practices of such dubious utility? Was it for any permanent benefit to the *self* that austerities, penances, vigils etc. were performed?

This leads us to ask what exactly was supposed to be the result of moral actions.

The earliest thinkers of India made a distinction between the visible effect (*drśhtaphala*) and the invisible effect (*adrśhtaphala*) of a moral action, such as they conceived the rituals to be. When, for instance, *ghṛta* (clarified butter) was poured on the sacrificial fire, there was the visible effect in the shape of a tongue of fire and a column of smoke, but there was also an invisible effect in the moral world in the shape of merit if the ceremony had been rightly performed. Thus all ritualistic actions have double effects—one physical and visible, and the other moral and invisible. A good action is supposed to produce *dharma* (merit) and a bad action, whether materially or formally so, *adharma* (demerit). The physical effects follow the law of immediate succession, but the moral effects fructify at a much later time (in the next life in many cases, or even later) when the maturing conditions are present. Again, while the physical

effect is mainly, if not wholly, produced on others, the moral effect comes to rest upon the head of the doer himself (not however according to the Buddhists, who denied the continued existence of the same soul and who therefore held that the effect comes to rest upon others). Thus as with our actions we are scattering our energy all around we are gradually heaping at the same time on our head a pile of moral effects in the shape of *dharma* and *adharma*, *punya* and *pāpa* (virtue and sin). Unlike the intellectual memory, which Bergson says we all gather as we live, this memory is moral memory of the individual and is the invisible carrier not so much of personal identity as of moral destiny. This moral memory called *samskāra* (piled-up character or latent impression) is regarded as an objective force which makes for rebirth in a shape sometimes determined by the *vāsanā*, or desire of the expiring individual, sometimes under the superintendence of a personal God whose capacity does not extend to the suppression or suspension of the *samskāra*, and very often without reference to anything else. This *samskāra* is not generally accompanied by a persistence of intellectual memory but exceptional cases of *jātismaratva* (capacity to remember one's past life) do occur, and then we have persons who not only reap the fruits of their previous actions, but also know what these actions were. Buddha, for instance, is credited in the *Jātaka* or Birth stories with the reminiscence of a long series of his past lives.

Reserving for a later treatment the exact mode in which *kārma* was supposed to operate in rebirth, we may here notice briefly the peculiar theory of heaven advocated by Indian thinkers to discourage the people from taking to the way of *kārma*. In Vedic literature we come across burial as a mode of disposing of the dead (a practice which still survives for children and certain religious communities) and, occasionally connected with it, a belief in the bodily resurrection of the departed. But later speculations had to base themselves on the practice of cremation, which led to a disbelief in the possibility of the survival of the gross body and a belief that if any embodiment of the soul were still to be supposed, it must be of a finer nature. But there was the belief all along that whatsoever might be the

mode of survival the possibility of enjoying the fruits of action subsisted.

When once *kārma* fell from its pedestal of glory, a difficulty was felt regarding its proper function and position in spiritual culture. The most extreme among the thinkers roundly declared that all rites and ceremonies only served to bind the soul, for all actions were modes of ignorance, and salvation could come only through knowledge. If then the Scriptures obviously enjoined certain rites, these must not be construed as having any binding force on the wise.

The ascendancy of this standpoint is visible in the subtlety with which allegorical and symbolical meanings began to be traced in passages enjoining sacrifice. At a much later time than we are speaking about, a similar attempt was made to introduce spiritual and symbolic meanings into grossly sexual and sensual acts in Vaisnavism and Tantricism; but the germs of allegorical interpretation are present in much older literature. We are told, for instance, that the true sacrifice is that in which the mind is the bow, the sacred symbol *Om* is the arrow, and Brahma is the target. This change of attitude towards rites and ceremonies must have received a great impetus from the increasing strength of Jainism and Buddhism which discarded Vedic rites but did not fail to produce impressive personalities about whose intellect, character and final destiny the ordinary people had little doubt. At a much later time, when Hinduism sank back into formalism and occultism, we find Kabîr similarly denouncing the sanctimonious practices of different sects. The substitutes suggested for Karma were Knowledge (*Jñāna*), Faith (*Sraddhā*), Devotion (*Bhakti*) and Righteousness, and fierce dialectics were waged in favour of each as against the other proposed substitutes; but all agreed that formal practices were of little avail in the matter of salvation. To feel one's identity with the totality of Being and to behave accordingly—these constitute the sole means of redemption.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the Upanishads un-animously advocated the abandonment of all *karma*. There were moderates as well as extremists, and while the latter were uncompromising opponents of Karma the former thought that

karma was not without some value. As accessory to *Jñāna* and *Bhakti*, *Karma* was wanted (even *Asana* or posture, and *Prānāyama* or breathing, were later on called *Yogāṅgas* or accessories to contemplation)—in fact the soul could be prepared for illumination only through the performance of enjoined duties. Again and again we are told that if *Karma* without illumination is valueless for salvation, the same is true of *Jñāna* without *Karma*—in fact, a worse habitation is assigned to those who stick to the path of knowledge alone. The question had indeed a deeper issue involved in it than what appears at first sight. If *Jñāna* alone could suffice, the life of a house-holder—the whole *Varnāsrama dharma* (the duties of each caste and each period of life) in fact—was unessential and social duties had no binding force. But if no neglect of worldly duties was permissible, and saving knowledge could come as much to the house-holder as to the recluse, the whole world need not turn ascetic and retire to the forest. As a matter of fact we find that many eminent sages, *e.g.* Yajñavalkya, Vasistha, etc. had families,—they were *gotra-pravartakas* or heads of clans—and the great Janaka, to whom even ascetics went for illumination, ploughed his own field and performed other household duties.

It cannot be suggested seriously that the Indians to whom we owe so much subtle thought were yet so entirely devoid of common sense that they could suggest for a moment that the whole world should turn ascetic. They were less pessimistic as a whole than Schopenhauer who could find a solution of the *Weltsmer* only in a simultaneous denial of the *will to live* by all individuals. The Indians wanted to set apart a class of thinkers, just as Plato did, but they knew also, as all persons with common sense do, that to advocate universal celibacy meant the extinction of the human species. So, like Catholicism in the West, they prescribed celibacy for a class only, and extolled the householder as the fountain of race-continuity and the support of society as a whole. It was not *Karma*, then, that killed, but *Karma* done in a peculiar manner or with a peculiar motive. If the objectionable element of actions could be removed, all *karmas* were pretty much alike and the householder stood exactly on the same plane with the ascetic.

Thus between actionlessness and action was interposed dispassionate and detached action which, as action, fulfilled social obligation and, as detachment, prevented the generation of fruits or moral effects inimical to salvation. It is only when an action is done with the intention of acquiring personal results that it serves to bind—even a desire for heaven is a kind of desire (*istāpārti*) and therefore a mode of bondage. How then is detached action possible? Let duty be its own motive *i.e.* let it be done for its own sake—this is the conclusion to which Indian philosophers came as a result of the conflict between knowledge and action.

Be happy in the thought that through you courses the current of Divine volition and that your function is to serve as the conduit pipe for the unimpeded flow of Divine activity. You can indeed pollute or retard the current by evil and ignorance, but there your capacity ends. So long as you erroneously lay claim to the current as your own, you follow the path of *prēyas* and *bhakti* (desire and enjoyment); the moment you realise that you are simply a channel, you take to the path of *srēyas* and *mukti* (the good and salvation). So your highest good is to annihilate yourself as an independently active entity and to understand that it is the good of the whole that is being realised through you. You are to abandon your finitude and to view all things *sub specie æternitatis*.—In conformity with this standpoint we find passages, added terminally to a sacrifice, which decline the accruing merit and direct it to god.

In connection with this dedication of the fruits of action to God, two opposite views regarding the reality of the finite emerge into view. If the finite is really to surrender the fruits to God, and the operation is to be a real sacrifice, then the finite must be a real entity and its act of willing must signify the operation of a real centre of moral activity. If the action does not belong to the individual as a real being, the surrender of fruits has no meaning. The fact that fruits of evil deeds could not be similarly dedicated shows that the transference could not be effected by magic alone. Only good actions could be so dedicated, which means that a substantial self-abnegation was involved in the process and the finite made a real sacrifice by its will.

But with this is often mingled the other view of the finite according to which the dedication is only rendering back to God what really belongs to Him. So long as a person illusorily fancies himself to be a *karta* (agent) he does not know his true nature. The actions do not really belong to him, they belong in reality to God; and he only misappropriates them to himself by ignorance. He is simply the instrument of Divine activity, and his salvation consists in knowing that. All that he does has been foredone by God, or if it is really done then it is not he that does it but God in so far as He is in him. There is no scope for personal activity, either because all things are fated, or because it is the Infinite that acts through the finite.

We reach here the heart of the difference between Hinduism and Christianity. The relentless logic characteristic of the Indian thinkers demanded that all sentiment must be set aside when dealing with man and his destiny. Action has been done, and good or evil result must follow. Somebody must enjoy that result and, except in Buddhism, this somebody is the person himself, for the law of moral justice would be violated if one should sow and another reap. The sins of fathers are not visited on their children, nor can any person take off the sins of others, or serve as a ransom for mankind.

It is, however, only in the intellectualistic systems of Sankara, Jaimini, Kapila and others, that pure logic dominated the relation between deed and fruition, and left no room for the intervention of God. The theistic systems of India, on the other hand, felt from the outset that, to such an impotent God, real devotion was both difficult and useless. Hence both in the Vaishnava and Shaiva schools, as well as in popular beliefs based on the Pauranic legends, attempts were made to keep the initiative capacity of God unaffected by the law of *karma*. The quarrels of Indian systems on this point remind one of the scholastic disputes regarding freedom and predestination, the intellect and the will of God, in Mediæval Europe. In both, the real question was the nature and amount of freedom and the possibility of new beginning left to God and to man. If what we do here and now determines what we shall be elsewhere in future, what possibility is left open for working off demerit in

case of evil action, or of ever gaining salvation at the end?

But, as has been observed before, the Indian theistic systems refused to accept the doctrine of *karma* in its entirety, for then the power of God had to be conceived as limited. They therefore continued to use expressions like *anugraha*, *karuṇā*, *prasāda* (mercy or grace) of God and thought that in salvation there must not only be the approach of man towards God, but also the condescension of God to come down to man. Popular belief reared itself on the inherent possibility that, unless God willingly meets the devotee half-way, no austerity or penance or sacrifice could be of any avail.

While so much was being said for and against *karma*, it was necessary to determine precisely its nature and kinds, for even if it were true that some *karmas* were inefficacious for the *summum bonum*, others might be of different degrees of usefulness. For that, again, it was necessary to know what the actions were required to culminate in, before the highest good could be achieved. There is a remarkable consensus of opinion in Indian thought on this point, in spite of certain differences.

Some were uncompromising advocates of social and caste duties and held that salvation could come from the faithful performance of social obligations. It is by serving others according to one's station and capacity that one could gain salvation. And they were partly right in this that even on the monistic theory such a step was justifiable. Pantheism in India has taken two forms. The one is the view that Being alone exists and the whole phenomenal world is an illusion. But, coupled with it, we have the other that everything is *Brahman*—a view which implies that finitude is not altogether an illusion but is, like the *natura naturata* in Spinoza's system, a transformation of the One into the totality of the Many. The many is the tangible form of the One, and to serve this many is really to serve the One which is invisibly present in it.

The field of doing good thus widened till it touched Brahma on the one side, and the blade of grass on the other. No one who reads the *mantrams* of the *tarpana* (oblation to the manes) can fail to be impressed by the largeness of the Hindu heart and its solicitude for the good of creation as a whole.

But the performance of duty may degenerate into a kind of habit where the intention may be absent, and things may be done simply because others do them. Hence it was felt necessary by some to point out that mechanical conformity without knowledge and intention was not enough. Sacrifices form the lowest class of action, as they may be blindly performed, and may not indicate an active and conscious good will towards others. In the Buddhistic, Jaina and Yoga systems, therefore, an elaborate system of moral training was laid down to get beyond mere formality and to reach true knowledge. None of these put any very great stress on the necessity of God. Buddhism was practically silent about God; the Jainas regarded Him as the greatest of the *Arhatas* or omniscient beings, but not the only one; and the Yogins wanted a God only as a help to meditation and as a supreme example.

The ascendancy of knowledge in salvation is akin to its ascendancy in all fields, for after all neither sacrifice nor conduct is possible without a theory of reality. But there is always the danger that speculation may transform itself from a means into an end, and that the belief should gain currency that knowledge alone is enough for salvation. The danger is increased when it is further supposed that this knowledge has no reference to the external world, and in fact, that the wordly wise are the least fitted to know reality.

Again and again in the Upanishads we are told that all knowledge except self-knowledge is *avidyā* which is sometimes regarded as a positive hindrance to true knowledge, but is at others viewed more favourably as helping self-knowledge (*avidyayā mṛtyum tīrtvā vidyayā amṛtamasnutê*: by material knowledge cross death and then by self-knowledge enjoy immortality). This condemnation is more frequent in subsequent literature; and faith, or devotion, or most frequently knowledge, is in turn regarded as the sole means of salvation.

The long and interesting history of this doctrine, of such vital import in regulating human activity, may lead one to hope that the stream of India's contribution to this region of thought will not stagnate at the phase it reached before the impact of Western Civilisation came upon India.

HAFIZ AND HIS ZOROASTRIAN MURSHED.

By D. J. IRANI.

Hafiz, the Persian nightingale, was both a poet and a philosopher. His spiritual experiences are as sweetly sung by him as his raptures of love, his delight for the budding Spring and the sparkling wine. It is an undying joy to read the songs of Hafiz, his poems of burning love, and the joy becomes more exquisite still when we see Love expanding until it comes into tune with the Infinite.

But every *Sálik* (traveller) on the Path of Love requires a *Murshéd*, a spiritual leader or guide. The soul is trammelled, the path is obscure, beset with difficulties untold; and naught but the guidance of a loving and knowing *Murshéd* can lead the soul triumphantly to its ultimate destination. Then Realisation comes, the union with the Beloved is effected, the divine essence within us finds its own perfection and reaches its goal.

And who was the *Murshéd* to whom Hafiz owed all his enlightenment, all his progress towards perfection? He was a Zoroastrian Magian,—the *Pir-e-Moghán* of the *Diván-e-Hafiz*.

Hafiz knew the value of the human soul. He knew that the heart within was a mirror fine enough to reflect the image of the Lord, but that it was covered with dust which marred its reflecting power and impaired the vision. Who could cleanse the dust? Where was the master who could bestow on the mirror its pristine power to reflect the image? And so Hafiz prays to Providence to grant him the company of a man of insight, a real spiritual guide.

The heart which is a royal mirror is tarnished with dust,
From Providence I seek for the company of a man of
translucent intellect.

546.2

Such a guide he found in the old Magian who owned a wine-house in the outskirts of the town. He found the light he was in search of, at the temple of the Magian. Apart from

the wine,—the actual juice of the grape which regaled the heart of Hafiz as much as it did that of Omar Khayyam,—the old Pir-e-Moghán, with his ancient lore of Zoroastrian Persia, so satisfied the spiritual cravings of the soul of the poet that he sings out :

Turn not your face away from the lane of the Magi
For they sell there the key to the solution of all difficulties.

560.4

To the poetic nature of Hafiz,—to a spirit which loved freedom from convention,—fanaticism or bigotry in any form, or by any set of men, was repugnant. Hence the company of the other sages and divines of the time, the orthodox *mullas* and the bigoted *sheikhs*, whom he so often castigates in the Diván, must have appeared so boring and unbearable to him that Hafiz announces that he will serve the Pier-e-Moghán only and sever his connection with all the others.

Go Hafiz and render thy service to the Old Magian.
Seize hold of his skirt and sever yourself from everything else.

365.7

And in this decision of his, to become the disciple of the Magian, he cares not for name and fame. He has cast his lot with the Zoroastrian sage. His heart is at peace, and he believes his soul will rightly be set on its way to the realisation of its object. He believes the path will be made smooth and easy by the Magian sage. Men of broad vision and wide sympathy are considered heretics by their orthodox brethren of every religion. Hafiz suffers in the same way, but he cares not whether his name is sought to be brought to the dust likewise. And with perfect nonchalance he says :

May the good fortune of the Old Man of the Magi endure,
for all else is then easy ;
Let others go their way and remove from their memory
my name.

441.9

To Hafiz not only was the goal of life beyond perception, but the object, the meaning of it all had so long been outside the pale of knowledge and understanding. His vision was blurred, his mind was chaos. We do not exactly know how it all happened, but Hafiz knocks at the door of Old Zoroastrian Sage, and the door of meaning (Reality) is slowly but surely opened unto him.

The gate of Meaning (Reality) was opened unto my heart
on that day

When I became an inmate of the court of the Pir-e-Moghán.

For Hafiz was yearning to obtain the gem of Love, the gem with the wondrous power of transmuting the base metal of humanity into shining gold. In the treasure-house of the academy and the *madresah*, the preserve of the orthodox scholars whom he shuns for their narrow-mindedness, he does not hope to find the gem. In the mosque, the fanaticism of the divines and the sheikhs had, he believes, hidden the jewel. Hence Hafiz declares that Love bids him go from the monastery and the *madresah* and the mosque to the wine-house of the Magian sage, there to find the treasure.

Seek not the gem of Love, O Hafiz, from the corner of
the academy

Put your step out if you want to proceed in the quest.

566.11

From the mosque, I am sent by Love, to the tavern ;
I go obediently, O heart, and raise no question.

345.3

'And the robe of the devotee, which to Hafiz was nothing but a cloak of deceit to hide a multitude of sins and shortcomings, was dropped in the tavern of the Magi. It was cast off,—and what remained? We are startled to receive the answer from the lips of Hafiz, on which, however, no far-fetched interpreta-

tion should be placed, that the sacred-thread of the Zoroastrian was all that was left.

Once I had a holy cloak and it used to hide a hundred
faults of mine ;

It was pawned to wine and the minstrels ; and the sacred-
thread (of the Magi) was all that was left.

And here the broad vision and the large mind and heart of Hafiz become apparent. Hafiz was a Moslem ; Hafiz died a Moslem and a Shiah. He had the whole of the holy Koran by heart. Yet, he went to the tavern of the Zoroastrian sage simply because he found that, at that particular juncture, the Old Magian would lead him most quickly to the realisation of his object, the union with the Divine Beloved, the contact of the Divine Spark within and the Supreme Soul without. And this consummation he had always sought, both from the mosque and from the house of the Magian.

To me, who have made the corner of the tavern my
monastic cell.

To me, whose early-morning prayer is the praise of the
Pir-e-Moghán

To me, the want from mosque or tavern is union with
Thee

I entertain no thought besides this, and God is my witness.

40.1,4.

And the world can live in peace, the harmony of the Divine Kingdom of Heaven can rule even amongst us, should we, mortal men,—quarrelsome mites with bloated heads as we are,—realise the supreme truth given expression to by Hafiz in these exquisite lines :

Everyone is in quest of the Beloved whether he be sober
or drunk,

Every place is a House of Love whether it be the mosque
or the fire-temple.

The great thought expressed so finely in this verse is to be found in Omar Khayyam as well as in several other philosophic poets of Persia, and proves that the wholesale charge of bigotry laid at the door of Islam, without recognising such noble exceptions among its cultured devotees, is incorrect.

Long years Hafiz had spent in fruitless efforts for the acquisition of the wherewithal of vanity, the scholastic learning of the *madresah*, the false show and hypocrisy of the monastery. When standing at the door of the tavern to sit at the feet of the Old Magian sage there, Hafiz is overpowered with a feeling of shame for his lack of real attainments. What must then be the culture of the Old Man of the tavern?

I shall go to the lane of the tavern weeping and abashed,
For I am ashamed of my own miserable attainments.

325.4.

So Hafiz approaches with diffidence the house of the old master. Veritably, even as the followers of the ancient Magi, the Zoroastrians of to-day still do, the entrance of the house was cleansed and the door-step was sprinkled with water and all people old and young were welcomed to the place. Hafiz respectfully accosts the sage, and hears in reply the unpleasant but true statement that Realisation was impossible to a man whose life was led without judgement, whose eyes were fixed on no high ideals.

The entrance to the Magi's house was swept clean and
watered

And the Old Man sitting there had invited the young and
the old to his presence.

I saluted the sage and smiling he said unto me :

"O thou poor intoxicated fellow sated with wine

"I think union with wakeful good fortune will not be
granted unto thee

"For thou art resting in the embrace of a drowsy fortune."

Abashed, Hafiz hears this reproof, but none with an ardent desire to learn, no soul quickened with a genuine love, is ever turned away from the door of the old Magian. Cleanliness and purity have been the first requisites of the ancient creed of the Zoroastrian Magi, and Hafiz tells us how he is made to enter the house of the Magian sage :

Sighing came to me the Magian-child of the wine-seller,
And said, "Wake up, thou sleep-stained traveller,
"Wash and cleanse thyself and then come to the tavern,
"That this old ruined temple may not be polluted by thee.
"Pass through the stage of old age in piety, and let not
"The robe of advancing age be stained by the habit of
youthful ways."

498.2,3.

The veil of ignorance is then gradually raised, under the guidance of the knowing sage, kind and affectionate as only real sages can be. And Hafiz often proclaims his devotion and esteem for this Zoroastrian Murshéd of his in the Diván :

I am the slave of the Old Man of the Magi who has
released me from ignorance ;
Whatever my Old Master does is the very essence of
kind regard.

243.5.

The Message of the Infinite is now being borne in upon our poet. It comes from the silence of the woods ; it comes from the fragrance of the flowers, the singing of the nightingales. And as the knowledge of the sage proceeds from the Pehlevi lore of the Zoroastrians, Hafiz seems to listen to the Divine Message conveyed by the nightingale as if it too were couched in this ancient tongue of Zoroastrian Persia.

From a branch of the Cyprus tree, in the heroic tones
of ancient Pelhevi, the nightingale
Was singing last night the lesson-songs of the divine
stages.

533.I.

In his ecstasy Hafiz gives a poetic picture how Sraosh, the favourite angel of Zoroastrian theology, brings the wonderful tidings that the divine essence in him, and in all men, has its real abode elsewhere and not in this world of passing shows.

How shall I tell thee that last night in the tavern when
I was drunk and intoxicated,
What wonderful tidings were brought unto me by the
Sarush of the Invisible World!
(He said): "O thou royal falcon of high aspirations,
having for its seat the Sedreh in Heaven,
"Your nest (of final rest) is not in the corner of this
house of woes."

23. 5, 6.

Then the Realisation comes. It would require an essay in itself to trace the growth of the spiritual experiences of the poet. Suffice it to say here that he reached his goal. In one of his most beautiful odes (No. 171) he sings of receiving at last his Salvation and Freedom. Then he declares openly that this result he has achieved, this consummation he has reached, through the miraculous teachings of his Magian Murshéd.

The service of the Old Man of the Magi is a wonderful
elixir,
I became like dust before him and he exalted me to his
wonderful dignity.

171.9.

Till recently in Moslem Persia, the fanaticism of the orthodox and the want of knowledge of the unknowing used to look upon the Zoroastrians as if they were heathens. In their utter ignorance they closed their eyes against a brilliance and called it darkness. But when Hafiz, guided by his Magian sage, saw the Light of God in the house of his Murshéd, he proclaimed to the world where he saw it. To the frenzied followers of formalism he further says, with a courage that is astounding, that

they merely looked to empty forms, whereas he had a Vision of Truth itself and that, too, in the house of the Zoroastrian.

I behold the Light of God in the tavern of the Magi,
Just mark this wonder, what a light I see and from
what a place!

O Lord, who is the drainer of dregs of this wine-house?
For I find his door to be the alter for (urging) wants, and
the directing-arch for prayers.

O chief of the pilgrims, do not make show of thy
pretensions before me,

For thou beholdest a (mere) house, while I behold the
Lord of the House Himself.

395. 1, 2, 3.

Hafiz by the guidance of his Magian Pir has attained his wish. In ecstasy he comes to the tavern and inquires after his beloved Master to express his infinite devotion and love to him.

Where is he, who had his abode at the door of the tavern,
That I may lay my head at his feet and die before him.

404. 5.

Many a Divine, differing from Hafiz in the freedom of his views, and many an orthodox sheikh must have felt pity at seeing this great poet of Persia having a Zoroastrian for his Spiritual Guide. But Hafiz had a very pertinent answer for such pitying sheikhs.

I am a disciple of the Old Man of the Magi, O sheikh,
feel not offended with me ;

For you only held out the promise (of the great vision)
whilst he (the Magian) carried it out.

156.7.

Having found his goal with the help of his Master, Hafiz hardly felt himself concerned with the protest of the inmates of the *madresah* and the monastery. Indeed he had no hesitation in declaring that from the Day of Creation he must have been

destined to pay his homage to the Magian sage, 'and he was what he was,—anything else he could not be.

Now that my desire has been fulfilled through the tavern,
My heart has got disgusted with the academy and the
monastery.

504.6.

From the first day of Creation the ring of the Old
Magian is in my ear (I am his slave),
We are what we were, and will ever remain the same.

146.2.

Everyone knows what strained interpretations have been sought to be placed on the poems of Hafiz. As an English translator of Hafiz has rightly observed, after the attempts of the ultra-orthodox to disown Hafiz had failed to dislodge him from the place he had won in the hearts of the people, they began interpreting his poems in a way suited to their purpose. I have read commentaries by otherwise erudite scholars, who are so obsessed with their preconceived notions that they do not hesitate to interpret a line having a most plain and natural meaning in a way unimaginable to a dispassionate student. Similarly various interpretations may be given and are given about the Pir-e-Moghan of Hafiz.

However, my personal view is this. From the beginning of history, at any rate since the Medes accepted the Zoroastrian faith, the Magi are acknowledged to be the priests of the Zoroastrians, the repository of the learning and culture of ancient Zoroastrian Persia. The evidence in the Divan seems to me to be conclusive that the Pir-e-Moghan was not a mere allegorical figure, but a real Magian Sage who had been given the seat of honour at the tavern,—an institution mostly kept up by Zoroastrians, as for the Moslems the liquor trade was unlawful. There is no indication whatever that Hafiz used the phrase in any but its natural sense.

In a beautiful ode in which Hafiz holds an imaginary discourse with his beloved, the distinction is clearly drawn that

the Old Magian who belonged to the ancient faith of Persia followed customs which differed from those of Islam.

I said, "Wine and the patched cloak are not the recognised usages of religion."

She replied "These customs are practised according to the creed of the Old Magian."

228.6.

In the following lines also the suggestion appears very clear to me that the Pir-e-Moghan of Hafiz was a real Magian who loved to keep his fire-altar always burning as in the days of old :

I am held in regard at the temple of the Magi for this
reason,

That in my heart there is always a fire which is never
extinguished.

2.68.

And surely, it seems as if the love of Hafiz for his Magian Master moved him to sing out in one of his odes at the advent of Spring :

Revive the Zoroastrian religion and creed in the garden,
Now that the tulip has kindled the fire of Nimrod.

236.3.

Let it be understood that I record in this article simply the fact which has impressed me most in my study of Hafiz. Zoroastrian as I am, I fully believe that a righteous and a loving man, whether he be a Christian or a Jew, a Hindoo or a Moslem, can equally see "the Light of God" guided by his own sage on the Right Path of Truth. For Truth belongs to no one "chosen people," as unfortunately the world of the ultra-orthodox of every race and creed thinks. It belongs to all, as doth the Supreme Being, and in the recognition of this fundamental fact lies the salvation of humanity.

ILLUMINATED TRAVEL LITERATURE

*A Review.**

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

In the days when travelling was difficult, the resistance it offered was needful for the assimilation of foreign facts. Mind takes its own time in order to masticate and digest its experience while overcoming the opposition of the strangeness of things. That time was amply allowed to it when conveyances were slow and roads full of obstructions, when special conveniences and home comforts did not lure travellers to go on with their habitual life in unaccustomed surroundings. Anyhow, they were compelled to be serious and never could be in a journalistic frame of mind, hurriedly taking notes of passing things, forming plausible conclusions on casual data.

The inevitableness of the differences between different races, living away from each other, is rarely realised in its full truth when we approach it too quickly, and have no time to reach its significance. And yet it should be the aim of travelling not merely to ascertain facts, but to own them through understanding. When Marco Polo came to the East, the vast space he had to cross laboriously disciplined him for the comprehension of cultures that were distantly apart from his own. He had the proper perspective of space, time and struggle which minimised the shock of all unexpected contacts, without taking away the novelty of the unfamiliar.

To-day the Western holiday-makers, who pay brief visits to Eastern countries, comfortably rushing across vast changes of environment, are unceremoniously hurled upon differences that are too obviously on the surface. Here they suddenly miss all the products of progress to which they have become accustomed, during the latest growth of their own civilisation, since the time of their grandparents. In their own countries their consciousness is kept stirred all the time by a sudden and rapid

*The Travel Diary of a Philosopher, by Count Hermann Keyserling.

extension of power that arouses in their minds the exultation of unlimited possibility. When they come to a continent where nature's great store-house of wealth remains closed and where peoples' minds are mostly preoccupied in following some time-honoured rules which, as they themselves believe, give perfection to social life, it is no wonder that the strongest impression which these western travellers carry away with them is that of the greyness of a blank existence. They fail to see anything significant because they miss here the intense light in which they habitually live. They believe that the obscurity is absolute, they only see the dusk and very little of the world that lives and moves behind its screen.

It is even worse for those of the West who have the opportunity of living for a time among Eastern races. They seldom have the need of making any real adjustment of life with their surroundings. They carry their Western shell with them everywhere, they form exclusive communities of their own, and create round themselves an impervious atmosphere of prejudice altogether out of harmony with the land of their exile. The longer they live in such places, the more callously rigid grows their sheath, and the harder it becomes for them to understand their neighbours in their completeness of humanity. Their lengthy experience merely represents prolonged and toughened professional experience, which is a great hindrance to all real human knowledge.

Moreover, the natural difficulty in understanding alien culture and character has been augmented in the case of such Western sojourners by the utilitarian interests which most of them have in the East, giving rise to propaganda of misrepresentation. The weapon of publicity tipped with the insidious poison of calumny, has become enormous in extent and power in Western political life. History is being falsified with more deliberation and cunning than ever before. Though such propaganda of distorted truths and fabrications has mostly been used by Western nations against one another, we ourselves are not safe therefrom,—we who have not the various organised means of making our voice heard by the world.

Through this universal fog of mutual misunderstanding Hermann Keyserling's *Travel-Diary of a Philosopher* comes to us like a streak of sunlight. It is a unique book showing in the author that rare spirit of intellectual freedom which is a greater gift for the traveller than mere power of observation or scholarly equipment. It is said in the Upanishad that he who achieves spiritual serenity enters into the All. This is the highest privilege that man can earn for himself,—to be able to make the Universe his own, to find his place everywhere.

Travelling reaches its best truth when through it we extend our spiritual ownership in return for our gift of sympathy. The man who is proud of his mental exclusiveness sinks deeper and deeper into penury of soul the more he travels and the longer he resides in countries alien to his own. All that is physical and external is necessarily a barrier,—it is to keep secure that which is within. Like the walls of a house it has weight and dimension, and therefore it can easily be classified and compared with others of its kind; but it can be appropriated only so far as to produce the illusion that the entire thing is in one's possession even while that which is essential remains out of reach.

External material may yield rich strata of facts to science, it may have practical worth for gold-diggers and slave-drivers, and yet something which is profoundly valuable may ever be screened by it from the casual observer. Because of this drawback, it ultimately demoralises men for whom it is the sole concern. For, wherever our dealings with human beings are restricted to the material plane, whether in our own country or outside it, we lose the touch of the complete truth of man which only can save us from degradation.

The West may not be fully conscious of this, but there can be no doubt that its purely practical connection with non-Western races is injuring its moral nature, wearing away the sensitiveness of its inner organ which is for the full recognition of human truth. Man's selfishness, the principal aspect of *avidyá*, obscurity of spiritual vision, ever had its manifestation in his society, but to-day its field has become fatally vast, its instruments powerful and numerous, its temptations overwhelming. And therefore apart from the physical and material

mischievous it causes, its moral menace has become world-wide, lowering over all humanity.

It is in these circumstances that we hail Count Keyserling's book as a great book, introducing for the first time in travel literature that philosophical illumination which lights up the inner recesses of man, where it is easy for us to realise the unity of kinship needed for true understanding of one another. It richly supplements the scientific method of collecting and analysing facts, defining their immutable separateness. Here we see an unfettered mind crossing the exterior boundaries of facts, entering the realm of spirit where each one of us should be able to realise his own self in different moods and different stages of growth, having different problems to solve with the materials that are at hand; in other words, man should be able to find *himself* in every variety of manifestation, and should not merely recognise the fact of the differences, which is individual, but the meaning of their truth which is universal.

The attitude of mind revealed in this book is even more precious than the fluidly suggestive speculations which run along its pages like reflections of light upon the current of a meandering stream.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN

I.

Red Oleanders.

Author's Interpretation.

(From the Manchester Guardian.)

Some few criticisms of my *Red Oleanders* that have appeared in the English papers have convinced me that to a considerable portion of my readers in England this play of mine seems obscure in meaning. Such a fact, I believe, almost always comes as a surprise to an author, because generally a work of this nature springs from a vision that is vivid to himself and a feeling that belongs to his direct experience. It is not for me to discuss the literary qualities of this book, which, being a mere translation, can have no pretension to a permanent place as literature in a language not the author's own. But I think, in justice to myself, I should make it clear that it has a definite meaning which can legitimately claim literary expression.

✓ There was a time when, in the human world, most of our important dealings with our fellow-beings were personal dealings, and the professional element in society was never hugely disproportionate to the normal constitution of its life. Therefore, naturally, in the tradition of literature, which is the ideal expression of man's life, interactions of human relationship have so long occupied the most important position.

To-day another factor has made itself immensely evident in shaping and guiding human destiny. It is the spirit of organisation, which is not social in character, but utilitarian. Christian Europe no longer depends upon Christ for her peace, but upon the League of Nations, because her peace is not disturbed by forceful individuals so much as by organised Powers. Naturally, in all organisations, variation of personality is eliminated, and the individual members, in so far as they represent the combination to which they belong, give expression to a common type and very little to their uniqueness of individuality.

But the personal man is not dead, only dominated by the organised

man. The world has become the world of Jack and Giant—the Giant who is not a gigantic man, but a multitude of men turned into a gigantic system.

I am not competent to say how Europe herself feels about this phenomenon produced by her science. Very likely her stout-hearted Jack is already busy making breaches in the walls of this fortress. But I can say, on behalf of inarticulate Asia, what a terrible reality for us is the West, whose relation to ourselves is so little human. The view that we can get of her, in our mutual dealings, is that of a titanic power with an endless curiosity to analyse and know, but without sympathy to understand ; with numberless arms to coerce and acquire, but no serenity of soul to realise and enjoy.

It is an organised passion of greed that is stalking abroad in the name of European civilisation. I know that this does not represent the whole truth as to its character, and therefore the pity of it is all the greater when mainly this aspect of it is forcibly presented to us, causing the spread of dumb sadness over a vast portion of the world and the dread of a devastation of its future into an utterly bankrupt life. Such an objectified passion lacks the true majesty of human nature ; it only assumes a terrifying bigness, its physiognomy blurred through its cover of an intricate network,—the scientific system. It barricades itself against all direct human touch with barriers of race pride and prestige of power. The impersonal pressure which, from its aloofness, it applies to our living soul is enormous, ever narrowing our prospect of growth, smothering the power of initiative in our mind.

Once our people had either an Akbar or an Aurangzeb to deal with ; now we have an organised avarice,—frightfully simple in its purpose, mechanically complicated in its process. Its messengers who come to us—be they Lord Birkenhead or Lord Curzon—are never for us our fellow-beings in flesh and blood, as were Julius Caesar and Antony who could easily find their immortal places in Shakespeare's drama. They are abstractions, at once far and near, and therefore awful ; they are obscure to us in the dark secrecy of their political laboratory and yet grimly concrete in their grasp upon our vitals.

Therefore it should cause no surprise to anybody if a poet, belonging to a continent swallowed by the menacing shadow of Europe, gives a prominent place among the *dramatis personæ* of his play to an apparition

which now so powerfully occupies the imagination of a vast world consisting of non-Western races. It is not an individual, but a doom ; and therefore it should never be compared to such characters as Lady Macbeth by those who wish to find a literary precedent. I am told that science has become a principal subject for some notable poets in Europe. That is natural, for science has permeated Western life ; it no longer has its own cradle in the secluded cells of the learned. In a similar manner, the hungry purpose, having science for its steed, running about unchecked, trampling our life's harvest, is not an intellectual generalisation unfit for imaginative literature. It is intensely real ; its hot breath is upon us ; its touch is all over our shrinking soul. It is the principal hero to-day in the drama of human history ; and I trust I have the right to invoke it in my own play, not in the spirit of a politician, but of a poet, possibly a lyrical poet.

I am glad to find that my critics readily acknowledge that Nandini, the heroine of the play, has definite features of an individual person. She is not an abstraction, but is pursued by an abstraction, like one tormented by a ghost. And this is the drama. Nandini is a real woman who knows that wealth and power are *māyā*, and that the highest expression of life is in love, which she manifests in this play in her love for Ranjan. But love-ties are ruthlessly molested by megalomaniac ambition, while an acquisitive intellect plies its psychological curiosity, probing into the elusive mystery of love through vivisection.

I can assure my readers that I never meant to use this book as propaganda. It is a vision that has come to me in the darkest hour of dismay. I have a stronger faith in the simple personality of man than in the prolific brood of machinery that wants to crowd it out. This personality—the divine essence of the infinite in the vessel of the finite—has its last treasure-house in woman's heart. Her pervading influence will some day restore the human to the desolated world of man. As in the animal world the physically meek has to-day inherited the earth, woman will one day prove that the meek in soul, through the sure power of love, will rescue this world from the dominance of the unholy spirit of rapacity. The joy of this faith has inspired me to pour all my heart into painting against the background of black shadows—the nightmare of a devil's temptation—the portrait of Nandini as the bearer of the message of reality, the saviour through death.

II.

East and West.

(Comment on above interpretation by Manchester Guardian.)

In a letter sent to us by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore on the reception of his poetic play *Red Oleanders*, an indictment, at once passionate and philosophical, is directed against the massive materialism of the Western world. The Indian, as Dr. Tagore sees the case, is denied those personal relations with the European or the American which alone can sweeten life and keep humanity human. Instead, he feels the relentless pressure of an organised abstraction to whose shattering force science contributes a merciless momentum.

But it is not the Orient alone that shudders under this menace, and if Dr. Tagore thinks that sensitive and intelligent Europeans are complacent about the floundering of the new Leviathan he is less than just. European literature and, to a rapidly increasing extent, American literature, ring with the outcry of the little man swept away on a wave of forces that he did not fashion and cannot control. Since Antigone stood face to face with Creon the conflict of the one and the many has gone on and is now intensified by the multiplication of the many from the hundred to the hundred million. The ruler of the hundred million, be he autocrat or elected person, inevitably becomes an abstraction, and if the India Office seems a distant and chilly thing to India, so also seems Downing Street to an English voter.

Oceans divide us from the East, and that aggravates undoubtedly the individual's sense of impotence ; but the problem of Leviathan is, in its essence, the same for East and West. We share a common burden, and we should equally be at pains to prevent the organisation of man from becoming the brutalisation of man. We, all of us, who take any thought for the Commonwealth, are seeking hooks to bind Leviathan. We can do it by doing our own thinking and making democratic institutions as responsive as may be to the matter of our thought. We can do it, again, by strengthening all those associations of goodwill or common beneficent purpose which cut across the boundaries of the nations and link men of one faith or craft or social aim. We can do it by personal courtesy to our fellow-Jacks in a giant-ravaged world.

We can acknowledge Dr. Tagore's grievance against a West

which holds an East in fee, but we can assure him that we feel Leviathan's pressure on our own backs and are not all of us complacent under the load. He has dramatised humanity tormented by man-forces ; a glance at the modern European drama will show him that he has many companions in purpose as in practice. The last century liberated tremendous forces and left it for this one to control them. People are placed in subjection to things, more terribly perhaps in the East than in the West, but there is an increasing realisation of our plight. Dr. Tagore is not alone in his dismay, nor is he alone in desiring a restatement of personal values in a wilderness of impersonal forces.

III.

Susil Kumar Rudra.

By C. F. Andrews.

In the passing away of Susil Kumar Rudra our Visva-bharati has lost one of its practical idealists, who had already given his heart to the work which the Founder-President had undertaken. It is an open secret that he wished to spend the closing years of his life at Santiniketan and to take part in the activities of Visva-bharati as far as he was able to do so ; and it was only the sudden illness which overtook him, that prevented this purpose from being fulfilled.

His own life began in the town of Burdwan, not far from Santiniketan itself. His father Pyari Mohan Rudra was living in Burdwan, when his son Susil was born. In the Burdwan Church, there is a tablet to the memory of Susil Rudra's father, and the house where he was born can still be pointed out. He was the same age as our Founder-President, being born in the year 1861. His early days were full of suffering and unhappiness owing to the loss of his mother. His father had to travel about a great deal and young Susil was left very much alone.

When he reached the College standard he was sent to the Duff College and also to the Presidency College where he gained his M.A. degree, taking Botany as his chief subject and also studying Economics and History. During these days at the University his faith was very greatly shaken by the atmosphere around him, which was full of intellectual and spiritual doubts and questionings ; but a long period of residence at the Oxford University Mission, in Cornwallis Street, where he made the friend-

ship of Father Brown and other members of the Oxford Brotherhood, brought back to him a renewal of his faith. Living among them and sharing their simple ascetic life, he himself became strong in his own spiritual faith once more.

Susil Rudra went to Delhi as a professor, in the year 1886 ; and for the whole rest of his active life he never removed from Delhi at all. For over thirty years he dedicated his great powers to the service of St. Steven's College, and he gave to the work his entire unremitting devotion. He became Principal of the College in the year 1905.

At the age of thirty he married a Punjabi lady, and three children were born to him, who still survive. The eldest, whose name is Sudhir Rudra, is now a professor at Allahabad University. His daughter is married to Prof. G. C. Chatterji of the Government College, Lahore. His youngest son Ajit has gained a Royal Commission in the Indian Army and will soon be promoted to a Captaincy.

I have never had such a friend in all my life as Susil Rudra was to me ever since I came out to Delhi in 1904. He saved me from a thousand pitfalls, and gave me a true instinct which enabled me to understand India as I could never have understood, if I had been left to my resources. Far more than this, he made his own house my home and his children became my children. I lived with him and we became quite inseparable. For our holidays we went together up to Kotgarh in the Simla Hills, and stayed with S. E. Stokes and met there also Sadhu Sunder Singh. Even to-day, now that my friend Susil is no more, I feel that I have, in the homes of his children a house of rest where I shall always be welcome and shall occupy the place that Susil himself occupied when he was alive.

One of the greatest sacrifices of Susil Rudra's life was probably the day on which he finally urged me to give up the work at Delhi and come to Santiniketan. I had left the final choice almost entirely to him, and if he had pressed me to stay longer, I should have felt that it was necessary for me to continue in Delhi. But instead of asking that I should stay with him, he told me positively that I must go, and he gave me his blessings when I went. Few can understand what a wrench it was to him thus to give me up, and to lose me outwardly in his daily life, after all these years of inseparable companionship. To me also the wrench was greater than I can express.

Whenever it was at all possible Susil Rudra would come to Santiniketan, in order to stay with me for a time ; and when he came down to

the Asram he would endear himself to everyone in the Asram, from *Borodada*, the eldest, down to the youngest child. He often took classes on such visits, and further did much private teaching. His utter devotion to the Founder-president was one of the deepest things in his life. As a Bengali, he was able to enter deeply into the teaching of the poet through his books and poems, and his reverence for him was not merely intellectual but also spiritual. He regarded him in his thoughts as one of the greatest teachers of the age.

During these visits to Bolpur, his mind had been steadily fixed and made up to come down and live with us, when his work in the College at Delhi was over. We used to talk over this plan, time after time, and on one occasion it seemed to me very near to fulfilment. He became a member of our Governing Body, and this drew him even more closely to us than before. But just after his retirement, when his plans for the future were being formed, the doctors suddenly discovered that he was attacked by an incurable disease, and he knew for the first time that his days on earth were numbered. The last months of his life were, therefore, spent entirely with his children ; and it was in the presence of his children that he passed away at Solon.

It is not easy to describe the beauty of the character of Susil Kumar Rudra, for its very perfection lay in its humility and self-effacement. Even to speak of him now and to praise him seems almost wrong, because of this atmosphere of retirement in which he always lived and moved and had his being. No one whom I have ever known was able so completely to obliterate himself in the service of others as Susil Kumar Rudra. No one was so completely unconscious of self-sacrifice while doing so. Furthermore, Susil Kumar Rudra had retained all the greatest Indian instincts of kindness, meekness, calmness, reverence, gentleness and peace, which made his life akin to the best that was in India of old. He was never regarded by any one as a 'foreigner' in India because of his Christian profession. Rather he became a friend both of Hindus and Mussalmans, and was trusted by both in a quite peculiar manner.

In his last moments, it was my own great privilege to be with him. His thoughts were always about two things,—his country and the Divine Life. About his country, his thoughts were saddened at the last by the persistence of the Hindu-Muslim disunion. But towards the end, his thoughts were turned more and more to the Divine Life. He would speak

about it constantly, and would say to me how his faith in Christ had made the life beyond the grave a living reality to him.

IV.

[The following address was given by Mr. C. F. Andrews at the last Annual Celebration, over which he presided in the absence of the Founder-President:]

It will easily be understood, with what extreme diffidence and shrinking I speak to you this morning in the place of those who were so far more worthy and had so much greater right and capacity to speak than I. In our own Gurudev's absence, which we are all feeling every moment of the time during our festival, we did our utmost to get one to preside, who is revered and venerated by us all no less for his goodness than for his massive learning: Dr. Brajendranath Seal; and when he could not do so, we sought to obtain the help of my own friend and companion, Babu Bhagwan Das, who is also one of our Vice-Presidents and whom we equally venerate and regard for his saintly character and learning. But he was too ill to come. Only when it was impossible to get any one else, among our Vice-Presidents, I was at last obliged to take the chair.

A thought which gave me more confidence than I otherwise should have possessed, was the knowledge that Professor Sten Konow is with us. He will shortly address us both in Sanskrit and in English, and we shall listen to him with the deep regard and respect that is due to one who has already, from the cold north of Norway, realised in his own person our Visva-bharati ideal,—learning patiently and profoundly, year after year, the ancient wisdom of the East with all the love and reverence that is due to it from the younger culture of the West. We have admitted him, and his own dear wife, Mrs. Konow, not only into our midst, but into our hearts. Their simple goodness and humanity has won our heart's allegiance more than all the intellectual respect which his wealth of learning has rightly demanded from us. We have felt, in them both, that human touch, which makes the whole world kin. I say this myself from the depth of a very grateful experience on behalf of us all.

And there is another thought, most precious, at such a time as this. In this sacred Asram, under this mango grove, we are not here alone. Maharshi is with us in spirit and Raja Ram Mohan Roy from whom we

trace our descent. For we are carrying out their spiritual desires and longings, which date far back into the past. We remember how Raja Ram Mohan Roy united all races and all religions in his own amplitude of high ideal. We can never forget how Maharshi, in his last will and testament, declared that this very grove, wherein we are seated, should be freely open in loving welcome to every one, of whatever race or clime, who wished to worship God in spirit and in truth,—not to man only, but to the animals and birds and every living creature. During nearly the length of a whole generation, he lived here in his old age, sanctifying by his prayers the very atmosphere which we breathe.

One further thought, which to me is dearest of all, is the daily remembrance, that our Gurudev himself is with us and not really absent from us at all. The human heart has its own unique powers of concentration, and the soul can make its presence felt almost corporeally,—just as the rays of the sun can penetrate space and make their warmth and radiance known in distant lands. Therefore we are feeling the radiance and the sunshine of our Rabindranath, this morning; and our own hearts and minds are illuminated by his conscious presence in our midst. All our hearts' devotion and reverence and tenderness of intimate affection we lay at his feet as we make our *pranam* to him who is our Founder and our Head. When the news came about his illness in a far off land our anxiety was painfully acute; but only yesterday, we received his festival greetings with intense relief and happiness, and along with these came the reassurance that his health was improved and that he was soon coming back to Europe.

We bring back to memory with him, on his distant voyage, Leonard Elmhirst, the Head of Sriniketan, who is caring for our Gurudev with the devotion of the very same love which is burning in all our hearts. We recall the serious illness which compelled Rathindranath Tagore to remain behind in London,—an illness caused entirely by the strain of the Visva-bharati burden, which, as one of our honoured Secretaries, he has borne so faithfully and unselfishly year after year, along with his fellow worker in the same arduous duty, Prasanta Mahalanobis. We recognise with admiration the simple truth, that but for their indefatigable work, which has often gone on long and late into the night, at the cost of health itself, our Visva-bharati could never have passed through the early critical period of its construction, when foundation stones had to be laid on which a worthy superstructure might be afterwards erected.

I would add to theirs the name of the one who has been assisting in his absence, Gaur Gopal Ghose, to whom along with many others the success of this happy Festival is due, and also one who has been a most faithful and devoted Assistant Secretary in Calcutta, Kishori Mohan Santra, who is now lying ill at Giridih with an illness which did not prevent him to the very last from carrying on his secretarial work.

Before calling upon Dr. Sten Konow to speak, may I venture to say something concerning the original conception of the Visva-bharati ideal which our Founder has given us. For, as I have said, he is himself, even in his absence, inspiring this Gathering and giving us the strength to carry out his wishes. For that which we long most for, as a result of this meeting, is not to set forward any new designs of our own, but rather to understand afresh, in a living manner, the lesson which our Founder has taught us.

In my own individual life, the inner struggle to find the truth has been long and painful. Even yet the struggle has only just passed through its first stage, and every day I need to utter the prayer: *Tamaso mā jyōtīr gamaya*. For I have not yet attained. It has been necessary to unlearn more than I have learnt and the revolution in my mind which continued its reverberations all through the European War has not yet been completed. But one unfailing teacher and guide, who has led me forward from darkness to light and from untruth to truth by his personal inspiration, has been the Poet, whom we love to call Gurudev, Rabindranath Tagore.

I can remember well how I struggled with in mental conflict in Japan, when his lectures on Nationalism were being written. There were two points on which then I differed from him, and therefore I protested with vehemence. One was with regard to his use of the words 'nationalism' and 'nation' as though the latter word implied to him a mere temporary phase (and a selfish one at that) in the history of humanity, through which the West had passed, leading to monstrous forms of disease within the body of mankind. I protested at that time even against his final words, when he said: 'To me there is but one Nation, the nation of Man.' I objected and said: 'We must keep our nationalism, in order to be international.' The truth was I did not then see clearly how selfishly narrow such western nationalism could become, and indeed had already become in my own nation, with its imperial policy of world expansion and world dominion. I did not yet see, that this theory of the rivalry and competition

of separate nations for power, in the limited field of earth, was leading directly to the destruction of mankind.

The second protest, which I then made, was at the severity of the condemnation of the West included in the same essay. To this criticism of mine, he very nobly responded by inserting two passages which gave in the most generous manner his appreciation of the West, while leaving his condemnation as strong in character as before. It is clear to me now, that I had not then, in the year 1916, realised the havoc that Europe had wrought among the ancient civilisations of the world.

But the War, as it proceeded, came to me, as to many others, with great disillusioning power. The revelation of the Secret Treaties, by which the Great Powers were found out later on to have been busy from the very first, dividing the spoils, came as a terrible shock to me early in the year 1918. The indignation at these unrighteous treaties, and at the starvation blockades which followed, was so great that my mind became almost entirely distraught. Yet all the while I had with me one un-failing teacher and guide,—the poet himself. For I could see more and more clearly that the Poet had been right in Japan and I had been wrong. He had judged the evils of nationalism none too hardly. He had condemned the imperialism of Europe none too severely. What he had dared, with amazing courage, to say then,—at the height of the war fever,—we were ourselves compelled to confess later on as true.

It was in this hard school of mental anguish, that the lesson of Visva-bharati was learnt in my own personal experience, and a lesson thus learnt can never be forgotten.

Let me now trace a further personal experience, which brings in directly the Poet's own mind and shows how the Visva-bharati ideal seemed to take shape and grow. For I had the great good fortune to be with him at the time when he wrote the lectures afterwards embodied in the book called *A Centre of India Culture*. These followed close upon a small pamphlet, which was a marvellous *tour de force* in the way of irony, called *The Parrot's Training*. They represented the extreme point which he had reached in his desire, as a poet, to set forth the need of differentiation and colour and light in the world of mankind, instead of the drab uniformity of a monotonous Western culture spread over the surface of the globe. He longed for India to become distinct and individual ; to recreate her own many-sided religious ideal, and to bring it to a unit, at some centre, in order East might meet that West, not as a beggar and

a dependent, but as an equal and a comrade in the forward march of humanity, giving as much as she received. The very title of his published book showed that it was this distinction of the culture of the East for which he then strove, as the first step towards the unity of the culture of the world.

I do not think that it is possible to overestimate the hold which this idea of the sacredness of individual freedom has always had upon the poet's mind. A vague cosmopolitanism is the very opposite of his conception of the future. He would intensify the individuality and uniqueness of each and every true growth of the human spirit.

Let me give a striking personal example. He would urge me again and again to cling fast to my Christian devotional life as a priceless heritage. When he saw me at one time slipping into vagueness he warned me. He loved me for the very distinction which the fervour of a deep Christian faith had given me. He did not wish to proselytise or convert me to any other faith. It was the poet and the artist in him that rejoiced in variety. The poet's own songs, as far as I have been able to follow them, tell of the glory and the beauty of the Manifold, who is also the *Advaitam*.

But in Europe and America, when he witnessed with his own eyes the devastation of noble ideals of humanity wrought by the War, corresponding exactly to these very evils of nationalism which he had protested against in Japan, his whole heart rose up in revolt at such a narrow vision. Slowly the thought of Visva-bharati took shape in his mind. Santiniketan, instead of being only a centre of Indian Culture, was to become a centre of world culture and world fellowship.

I have but sketched in outline some of the bare facts of my own experience. Again and again the Poet has gone out at the imperative call of duty in order to make clear the full message of brotherhood and unity and peace which our name Visva-bharati denotes. We welcome him back to our hearts each time, but we know that he will be called upon to go from us once more ; for his work, which has its centre here, is as wide as the world. Here, in this Asram, the East and West *have* met, and never the twain shall part.

THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

Vol. III.

JANUARY, 1926

No. 4

THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR PEOPLE

[*Presidential Address at the Indian Philosophical Congress.*]

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

My timidity makes it difficult for me properly to enjoy the honour you have done me to-day by offering a chair which I cannot legitimately claim as my own. It has often made me wonder, since I had my invitation, whether it would suit my dignity to occupy such a precarious position on an ephemeral eminence, deservedly incurring anger from some and ridicule from others. While debating in my mind as to whether I should avoid this risk with the help of the doctor's certificate, it occurred to me that possibly my ignorance of philosophy was the best recommendation for this place in a philosophers' meeting,—that you wanted for your president a man who was blankly neutral and who consciously owed no allegiance to any particular system of metaphysics, being impartially innocent of them all. The most convenient thing about me is that the degree of my qualification is beyond the range of a comparative discussion,—it is so utterly negative. In my present situation, I may be compared to a candlestick that has none of the luminous qualities of a candle and, therefore, suitable for its allotted function, which is to remain darkly inactive.

But, unfortunately, you do not allow me to remain silent even in the circumstance when silence was declared to be prudent by one of our ancient sages. The only thing which encourages me to overcome my diffidence, and give expression in a speech to my unsophisticated mind, is the fact that in India all the *vidyás*,—poesy as well as philosophy,—live in a joint family. They never have the jealous sense of individualism maintain-

ing the punitive regulations against trespass that seem to be so rife in the West.

Plato as a philosopher decreed the banishment of poets from his ideal Republic. But, in India, philosophy ever sought alliance with poetry, because its mission was to occupy the people's life and not merely the learned seclusion of scholarship. Therefore, our tradition, though unsupported by historical evidence, has no hesitation in ascribing numerous verses to the great Sankarácárya, a metaphysician whom Plato would find it extremely difficult to exclude from his Utopia with the help of any inhospitable Immigration Law. Many of these poems may not have high poetical value, but no lover of literature ever blames the sage for infringement of propriety in condescending to manufacture verse.

According to our people, poetry naturally falls within the scope of a philosopher, when his reason is illumined into a vision. We have our great epic Mahábhárata, which is unique in world literature, not only because of the marvellous variety of human characters, great and small, discussed in its pages in all variety of psychological circumstances, but because of the ease with which it carries in its comprehensive capaciousness all kinds of speculation about ethics, politics and philosophy of life. Such an improvident generosity on the part of poesy, at the risk of exceeding its own proper limits of accomodation, has only been possible in India where a spirit of communism prevails the different individual groups of literature. In fact, the Mahabharata is a universe in itself in which various spheres of mind's creation find ample space for their complex dance rhythm. It does not represent the idiosyncrasy of a particular poet but the normal mentality of the people who are willing to be led along the many branched path of a whole world of thoughts, held together in a gigantic orb of narrative surrounded by innumerable satellites of episodes.

The numerous saints that India successively produced during the Mahomedan rule have all been singers whose verses are aflame with the fire of imagination. Their religious emotion had its spring in the depth of a philosophy that deals with

fundamental questions,—with the ultimate meaning of existence. That may not be remarkable in itself; but when we find that these songs are not specially meant for some exclusive pundits' gathering, but that they are sung in villages and listened to by men and women who are illiterate, we realise how philosophy has permeated the life of the people in India, how it has sunk deep into the sub-conscious mind of the country.

In my childhood I once heard from a singer, who was a devout Hindu, the following song of Kabir :

*When I hear of a fish in the water dying of thirst, it makes me laugh.
If it be true that the infinite Brahma pervades all space,
What is the meaning of the places of pilgrimage like Mathura
or Kashi?*

This laughter of Kabir did not hurt in the least the pious susceptibilities of the Hindu singer; on the contrary, he was ready to join the poet with his own. For he, by the philosophical freedom of his mind, was fully aware that Mathura or Kashi, as sites of God, did not have an absolute value of truth, though they had their symbolical importance. Therefore, while he himself was eager to make a pilgrimage to those places, he had no doubt in his mind that, if it were in his power directly to realise Brahma as an all-pervading reality, there would have been no necessity for him to visit any particular place for the quickening of his spiritual consciousness. He acknowledged the psychological necessity for such shrines, where generations of devotees have chosen to gather for the purpose of worship, in the same way as he felt the special efficacy for our mind of the time-honoured sacred texts made living by the voice of ages.

It is a village poet of East Bengal who in his songs preaches the philosophical doctrine that the universe has its reality in its relation to the Person. He sings :

*The sky and the earth are born of mine own eyes.
The hardness and softness, the cold and the heat
are the products of my own body ;
The sweet smell and the bad are of my own nose.*

This poet sings of the Eternal Person within him, coming out and appearing before his eyes just as the Vedic Rishi speaks of the "Person, who is in him, dwelling also in the heart of the Sun."

*I have seen the vision,
The vision of mine own revealing itself,
Coming out from within me.*

The significant fact about these philosophical poems is that they are of rude construction, written in a popular dialect and disclaimed by the academic literature; they are sung to the people, as composed by one of them who is dead, but whose songs have not followed him. Yet these singers almost arrogantly disown their direct obligation to philosophy, and there is a story of one of our rural poets who, after some learned text of the Vaishnava philosophy of emotion was explained to him, composed a song containing the following lines :

*Alas, a jeweller has come into the flower garden!—
He wants to appraise the truth of a lotus by rubbing it
against his touchstone.*

The members of the *Baül* sect belong to that mass of the people in Bengal who are not educated in the prevalent sense of the word. I remember how troubled they were, when I asked some of them to write down for me a collection of their songs. When they *did* venture to attempt it, I found it almost impossible to decipher their writing—the spelling and lettering were so outrageously unconventional. Yet their spiritual practices are founded upon a mystic philosophy of the human body, abstrusely technical. These people roam about singing their songs, one of which I heard years ago from my roadside window, the first two lines remaining inscribed in my memory :

*Nobody can tell whence the bird unknown
Comes into the cage and goes out.
I would feign put round its feet the fetter of my mind,
Could I bui capture it.*

This village poet evidently agrees with our sage of the Upanishad who says that our mind comes back baffled in its attempt to reach the Unknown Being; and yet this poet like the ancient sage does not give up his adventure of the infinite, thus implying that there is a way to its realisation. It reminds me of Shelley's poem in which he sings of the mystical spirit of Beauty :

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats, though unseen, among us ; visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower.
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance.

That this Unknown is the profoundest reality, though difficult of comprehension, is equally admitted by the English poet as by the nameless village singer of Bengal in whose music vibrate the wing beats of the unknown bird,— only Shelley's utterance is for the cultured few while the *Baül* song is for the tillers of the soil, for the simple folk of our village households, who are never bored by its mystic transcendentalism.

All this is owing to the wonderful system of mass education which has prevailed for ages in India, and which to-day is in danger of becoming extinct. We have our academic seats of learning where students flock round their famous teachers from distant parts of the country. These places are like lakes, full of deep but still water, which have to be approached through difficult paths. But the constant evaporation from them, forming clouds, is carried by the wind from field to field, across hills and dales and through all the different divisions of the land. Operas based upon legendary poems, recitations and story-telling by trained men, the lyrical wealth of the popular literature distributed far and wide by the agency of mendicant singers,—these are the clouds that help to irrigate the minds of the people with the ideas which in their original form belonged to difficult doctrines of metaphysics. Profound speculations contained in the systems of Sāṅkhya, Vedānta and Yôga are

transformed into the living harvest of the people's literature, brought to the door of those who can never have the leisure and training to pursue these thoughts to their fountain-head.

In order to enable a civilised community to carry on its complex functions, there must be a large number of men who have to take charge of its material needs, however onerous such task may be. Their vocation gives them no opportunity to cultivate their mind. Yet they form the vast multitude, compelled to turn themselves into unthinking machines of production, so that a few may have the time to think great thoughts, create immortal forms of art and to lead humanity to spiritual altitudes.

India has never neglected these social martyrs, but has tried to bring light into the grimy obscurity of their life-long toil, and has always acknowledged its duty to supply them with mental and spiritual food in assimilable form through the medium of a variety of ceremonies. This process is not carried on by any specially organised association of public service, but by a spontaneous social adjustment which acts like circulation of blood in our bodily system. Because of this, the work continues even when the original purpose ceases to exist.

Once when I was on a visit to a small Bengal village, mostly inhabited by Mahomedan cultivators, the villagers entertained me with an opera performance the literature of which belonged to an obsolete religious sect that had wide influence centuries ago. Though the religion itself is dead, its voice still continues preaching its philosophy to a people who in spite of their different culture are not tired of listening. It discussed according to its own doctrine the different elements, material and transcendental, that constitute human personality, comprehending the body, the self and the soul. Then came a dialogue during the course of which was related the incident of a person who wanted to make a journey to *Brindāban*, the Garden of Bliss, but was prevented by a watchman who startled him with an accusation of theft. The thieving was proved when it was shown that inside his clothes he was secretly trying to smuggle into the garden the *self*, passing it on as his own and not admitting that it is for his master. The culprit was caught

with the incriminating bundle in his possession which barred for him his passage to the supreme goal. Under a tattered canopy held on bamboo poles and lighted by a few smoking kerosine lamps, the village crowd, occasionally interrupted by howls of jackals in the neighbouring paddy fields, attended with untired interest, till the small hours of the morning, the performance of a drama, that discussed the ultimate meaning of all things in a seemingly incongruous setting of dance, music and humorous dialogue.

These illustrations will show how naturally, in India, poetry and philosophy have walked hand in hand, only because the latter has claimed its right to guide men to the practical path of their life's fulfilment. What is that fulfilment? It is our freedom in truth, which has for its prayer :

Lead us from the unreal to Reality.

For *satyam is ānandam*, the real is joy.

From my vocation as an artist in verse, I have come to my own idea about the joy of the real. For to give us the taste of reality through freedom of mind is the nature of all arts. When in relation to them we talk of æsthetics we must know that it is not about beauty in its ordinary meaning, but in that deeper meaning which a poet has expressed in his utterance : "Truth is beauty, beauty truth." An artist may paint a picture of a decrepit person not pleasant to look at, and yet we call it perfect when we become intensely conscious of its reality. The mind of the jealous woman in Browning's poem, watching the preparation of poison and in imagination gloating over its possible effect upon her rival, is not beautiful; but when it stands vividly real before our consciousness, through the unity of consistency in its idea and form, we have our enjoyment. The character of Karna, the great warrior of the Mahabharata, gives us a deeper delight through its occasional outbursts of meanness, than it would if it were a model picture of unadulterated magnanimity. The very contradictions which hurt the completeness of a moral ideal have helped us to feel the reality of the character, and this gives us joy, not because it is pleasant in itself, but because it is definite in its creation.

It is not wholly true that art has its value for us because in it we realise all that we fail to attain in our life; but the fact is that the function of art is to bring us, with its creations, into immediate touch with reality. These need not resemble actual facts of our experience, and yet they do delight our heart because they are made true to us. In the world of art, our consciousness being freed from the tangle of self-interest, we gain an unobstructed vision of unity, the incarnation of the real, which is a joy for ever.

As in the world of art, so in God's world, our soul waits for its freedom from the ego to reach that disinterested joy which is the source and goal of creation. It cries for its *mukti* into the unity of truth from the mirage of appearances endlessly pursued by the thirsty self. This idea of *mukti*, based upon metaphysics, has affected our life in India, touched the springs of our emotions, and supplications for it soar heavenward on the wings of poesy. We constantly hear men of scanty learning and simple faith singing in their prayer to *Tara*, the Goddess Redeemer :

For what sin should I be compelled to remain in this dungeon of the world of appearance?

They are afraid of being alienated from the world of truth, afraid of their perpetual drifting amidst the froth and foam of things, of being tossed about by the tidal waves of pleasure and pain and never reaching the ultimate meaning of life. Of these men, one may be a carter driving his cart to market, another a fisherman plying his net. They may not be prompt with an intelligent answer, if questioned about the deeper import of the song they sing, but they have no doubt in their mind, that the abiding cause of all misery is not so much in the lack of life's furniture as in the obscurity of life's significance. It is a common topic with such to decry an undue emphasis upon *me* and *mine*, which falsifies the perspective of truth. For, have they not often seen men, who are not above their own level in social position or intellectual acquirement, going out to seek Truth, leaving everything that they have behind them?

They know that the object of these adventurers is not better-

ment in worldly wealth and power,—it is *mukti*, freedom. They possibly know some poor fellow villager of their own craft, who remains in the world carrying on his daily vocation, and yet has the reputation of being emancipated in the heart of the Eternal. I myself have come across a fisherman singing with an inward absorption of mind, while fishing all day in the Ganges, who was pointed out to me by my boatmen, with awe, as a man of liberated spirit. He is out of reach of the conventional prices which are set upon men by society, and which classify them like toys arranged in the shop-windows according to the market standard of value.

When the figure of this fisherman comes to my mind, I cannot but think that their number is not small who with their lives sing the epic of the unfettered soul, but will never be known in history. These unsophisticated Indian peasants know that an Emperor is a decorated slave remaining chained to his Empire, that a millionaire is kept pilloried by his fate in the golden cage of his wealth, while this fisherman is free in the realm of light. When, groping in the dark, we stumble against objects, we cling to them believing them to be our only hope. When light comes we slacken our hold, finding them to be mere parts of the all to which we are related. The simple man of the village knows what freedom is—freedom from the isolation of self, from the isolation of things which imparts a fierce intensity to our sense of possession. He knows that this freedom is not in the mere negation of bondage, in the bareness of belongings, but in some positive realisation which gives pure joy to our being, and he sings :

To him who sinks into the deep, nothing remains unattained.

•

*Let my two minds meet and combine
And lead me to the City Wonderful.*

When the one mind of ours which wanders in search of things in the outer region of the varied, and the other which seeks the inward vision of unity, are no longer in conflict, they

help us to realise the *ajab*, the *anirvachanīya*, the ineffable. The poet saint Kabir has also the same message when he sings :

By saying that Supreme Reality only dwells in the inner realm of spirit we shame the outer world of matter, and also when we say that he is only in the outside we do not speak the truth.

According to these singers, truth is in unity and therefore freedom is in its realisation. The texts of our daily worship and meditation are for training our mind to overcome the barrier of separateness from the rest of existence and to realise *advaitam*, the Supreme Unity which is *anantam*, infinitude. It is philosophical wisdom having its universal radiation in the popular mind in India that inspires our prayer, our daily spiritual practices. It has its constant urging for us to go beyond the world of appearances in which facts as facts are alien to us, like the mere sounds of a foreign music; it speaks to us of an emancipation in the inner truth of all things in which the endless *many* reveals the *One*, as the multitude of notes, when we understand them, reveal to us the inner unity which is music.

But because this freedom is in truth itself and not in an appearance of it, no hurried path of success, forcibly cut out by the greed of result, can be a true path. And an obscure village poet, unknown to the world of recognised respectability, untrammelled by the standardised learning of the Education Department, sings :

O cruel man of urgent need, must you scorch with fire the mind which still is a bud? You will burst it into bits, destroy its perfume in your impatience. Do you not see that my lord, the Supreme Teacher, takes ages to perfect the flower and never is in a fury of haste? But because of your terrible greed you only rely on force, and what hope is there for you, O man of urgent need? "Prithee!" says Madan the poet. "Hurt not the mind of my Teacher. Know that only he who follows the simple current and loses himself, can hear the voice, O man of urgent need."

This poet knows that there is no external means of taking freedom by the throat. It is the inward process of losing ourselves that leads us to it. Bondage in all its forms

has its stronghold in the inner self and not in the outside world; it is in the dimming of our consciousness, in the narrowing of our perspective, in the wrong valuation of things.

The proof of this we find in the modern civilization whose motive force has become a ceaseless urgency of need. Its freedom is only the apparent freedom of inertia which does not know how and where to stop. There are some primitive people who have put an artificial value on human scalps and they develop an arithmetical fury which does not allow them to stop in the gathering of their trophies. They are driven by some cruel fate into an endless exaggeration which makes them ceaselessly run on an interminable path of addition. Such a freedom in their wild course of collection is the worst form of bondage. The cruel urgency of need is all the more aggravated in their case because of the lack of truth in its object. Similarly it should be realised that a mere addition to the rate of speed, to the paraphernalia of fat living and display of furniture, to the frightfulness of destructive armaments, only leads to an insensate orgy of a caricature of bigness. The links of bondage go on multiplying themselves, threatening to shackle the whole world with the chain forged by such unmeaning and unending urgency of need.

The idea of *mukti* in Christian theology is liberation from a punishment which we carry with our birth. In India it is from the dark enclosure of ignorance which causes the illusion of a self that seems final. But the enlightenment which frees us from this ignorance must not merely be negative. Freedom is not in an emptiness of its contents, it is in the harmony of communication through which we find no obstruction in realising our own being in the surrounding world. It is of this harmony, and not of a bare and barren isolation, that the Upanishad speaks, when it says that the truth no longer remains hidden in him who finds himself in the All.

Freedom in the material world has also the same meaning expressed in its own language. When nature's phenomena appeared to us as manifestations of an obscure and irrational caprice, we lived in an alien world never dreaming of our *swaraj* within its territory. With the discovery of the harmony of its

working with that of our reason, we realise our unity with it and, therefore, freedom. It is *avidyā*, ignorance, which causes our disunion with our surroundings. It is *vidyā*, the knowledge of the Brahma manifested in the material universe that makes us realise *advaitam*, the spirit of unity in the world of matter.

Those who have been brought up in a misunderstanding of this world's process, not knowing that it is his by his right of intelligence, are trained as cowards by a hopeless faith in the ordinance of a destiny darkly dealing its blows, offering no room for appeal. They submit without struggle when human rights are denied them, being accustomed to imagine themselves born as outlaws in a world constantly thrusting upon them incomprehensible surprises of accidents.

Also in the social or political field, the lack of freedom is based upon the spirit of alienation, on the imperfect realisation of *advaitam*. There our bondage is in the tortured link of union. One may imagine that an individual who succeeds in dissociating himself from his fellows attains real freedom, inasmuch as all ties of relationship imply obligation to others. But we know that, though it may sound paradoxical, it is true that in the human world only a perfect arrangement of interdependence gives rise to freedom. The most individualistic of human beings, who own no responsibility, are the savages who fail to attain their fulness of manifestation. They live immersed in obscurity, like an ill-lighted fire that cannot liberate itself from its envelope of smoke. Only those may attain their freedom from the segregation of an eclipsed life, who have the power to cultivate mutual understanding and co-operation. The history of the growth of freedom is the history of the perfection of human relationship.

The strongest barrier against freedom in all departments of life is the selfishness of individuals or groups. Civilisation, whose object is to afford humanity its greatest possible opportunity of complete manifestation, perishes when some selfish passion, in place of a moral ideal, is allowed to exploit its resources unopposed, for its own purposes. For the greed of acquisition and the living principle of creation are antagonistic to each other. Life has brought with it the first triumph of

freedom in the world of the inert, because it is an inner expression and not merely an external fact, because it must always exceed the limits of its substance, never allowing its materials to clog its spirit, and yet ever keeping to the limits of its truth. Its accumulation must not suppress its harmony of growth, the harmony that unites the *in* and the *out*, the end and the means, the *what is* and the *what is to come*.

Life does not store up but assimilates; its spirit and its substance, its work and itself, are intimately united. When the non-living elements of our surroundings are stupendously disproportionate, when they are mechanical systems and hoarded possessions, then the mutual discord between our life and our world ends in the defeat of the former. The gulf thus created by the receding stream of soul we try to replenish with a continuous shower of wealth which may have the power to fill but not the power to unite. Therefore the gap is dangerously concealed under the glittering quick-sands of things which by their own accumulating weight cause a sudden subsidence, while we are in the depth of our sleep.

But the real tragedy does not lie in the destruction of our material security, it is in the obscuration of man himself in the human world. In his creative activities man makes his surroundings instinct with his own life and love. But in his utilitarian ambition he deforms and defiles it with the callous handling of his voracity. This world of man's manufacture with its discordant shrieks and mechanical movements, reacts upon his own nature, incessantly suggesting to him a scheme of universe which is an abstract system. In such a world there can be no question of *mukti*, because it is a solidly solitary fact, because the cage is all that we have, and no sky beyond it. In all appearance the world to us is a closed world, like a seed within its hard cover. But in the core of the seed there is the cry of Life for *mukti* even when the proof of its possibility is darkly silent. When some huge temptation tramples into stillness this living aspiration after *mukti*, then does civilisation die like a seed that has lost its urging for germination.

It is not altogether true that the ideal of *mukti* in India is based upon a philosophy of passivity. The Ishopanishad has

strongly asserted that man must wish to live a hundred years and go on doing his work; for, according to it, the complete truth is in the harmony of the infinite and the finite, the passive ideal of perfection and the active process of its revealment; according to it, he who pursues the knowledge of the infinite as an absolute truth sinks even into a deeper darkness than he who pursues the cult of the finite as complete in itself. He who thinks that a mere aggregation of changing notes has the ultimate value of unchanging music, is no doubt foolish; but his foolishness is exceeded by that of one who thinks that true music is devoid of all notes. But where is the reconciliation? Through what means does the music which is transcendental turn the facts of the detached notes into a vehicle of its expression? It is through the rhythm, the very limit of its composition. We reach the infinite through crossing the path that is definite. It is this that is meant in the following verse of the Isha :

He who knows the truth of the infinite and that of the finite both united together, crosses death by the help of avidyá, and by the help of vidyá reaches immortality.

The regulated life is the rhythm of the finite through whose very restrictions we pass to the immortal life. This *amritam*, the immortal life, is not a mere prolongation of physical existence, it is in the realisation of the perfect, it is in the well-proportioned beautiful definition of life which every moment surpasses its own limits and expresses the Eternal. In the very first verse of the Isha, the injunction is given to us **má gridhah**, *Thou shalt not covet*. But why should we not? Because greed, having no limit, smothers the rhythm of life—the rhythm which is expressive of the limitless.

The modern civilisation is largely composed of *atmahanô-janáh* who are spiritual suicides. It has lost its will for limiting its desires, for restraining its perpetual self-exaggeration. Because it has lost its philosophy of life, it loses its art of living. Like poetasters it mistakes skill for power and realism for reality. In the Middle Ages when Europe believed in the kingdom of heaven, she struggled to modulate her life's forces to effect their harmonious relation to this ideal, which always sent its call

to her activities in the midst of the boisterous conflict of her passions. There was in this endeavour an ever present scheme of creation, something which was positive, which had the authority to say : *Thou shalt not covet, thou must find thy true limits*. To-day there is only a furious rage for raising numberless brick-kilns in place of buildings. The great scheme of the master-builder has been smothered under the heaps of brick-dust. It proves the severance of *avidyá* from her union with *vidyá* giving rise to an unrhythmic power, ignoring all creative plan, igniting a flame that has heat but no light.

Creation is in rhythm,—the rhythm which is the border on which *vidyáncha avidyáncha*, the infinite and the finite, meet. We do not know how, from the indeterminate, the lotus flower finds its being. So long as it is merged in the vague it is nothing to us, and yet it must have been everywhere. Somehow from the vast it has been captured in a perfect rhythmical limit, forming an eddy in our consciousness, arousing within us a recognition of delight at the touch of the infinite which finitude gives. It is the limiting process which is the work of a creator, who finds his freedom through his restraints, the truth of the boundless through the reality of the bounds. The insatiable idolatry of material, that runs along an ever-lengthening line of extravagance, is inexpressive; it belongs to those regions which are *andhēnatamasāvritah*, enveloped in darkness, which ever carry the load of their inarticulate bulk. The true prayer of man is for the Real not for the big, for the Light which is not in incendiarism but in illumination, for Immortality which is not in duration of time, but in the eternity of the perfect.

Only because we have closed our path to the inner world of *mukti*, has the outer world become terrible in its exactions. It is a slavery to continue to live in a sphere where things are, yet where their meaning is obstructed. It has become possible for men to say that existence is evil, only because in our blindness we have missed something in which our existence has its truth. If a bird tries to soar in the sky with only one of its wings, it is offended with the wind for buffeting it down to the dust. All broken truths are evil. They hurt because they suggest something which they do not offer. Death does not hurt us, but

disease does, because disease constantly reminds us of health and yet withholds it from us. And life in a half world is evil, because it feigns finality when it is obviously incomplete, giving us the cup, but not the draught of life. All tragedies consist in truth remaining fragmentary, its cycle not being completed.

Let me close with a *Baül* song, over a century old, in which the poet sings of the eternal bond of union between the infinite and the finite soul, from which there can be no *mukti*, because it is an interrelation which makes truth complete, because love is ultimate, because absolute independence is the blankness of utter sterility. The idea in it is the same as we have in the Upanishad, that truth is neither in pure *vidyá* nor in *avidyá*, but in their union :

It goes on blossoming for ages, the soul-lotus in which I am bound, as well as thou, without escape. There is no end to the opening of its petals, and the honey in its has such sweetness that thou like an enchanted bee canst never desert it, and therefore thou art bound, and I am, and mukti is nowhere.

INDIAN RELIGION TO-DAY

By DR. STEN KONOW.

In my series of lectures in the Visva-bharati I have tried to follow the development of religious thought in Aryan India during the ages. The development has, up to quite recent times been, to all practical purposes, entirely Indian. From time to time, impulses and ideas may have been brought into India from abroad, but they have, in course of time, become so thoroughly Indianised that we cannot any more distinguish them.

Such a state of things must obviously be the result of a comparative isolation, which placed certain obstacles in the way of the free intercourse between the different parts of the world. And so the home-grown civilisation, crystallised into religious ideals, could acquire sufficient strength to be able to hold its own, whenever India came into closer contact with the outer world, for a shorter or longer period.

One would expect to find that matters became different as soon as such intercourse became livelier and more intimate, specially in the 19th Century, when the ancient civilisations of the East and the West met in full earnest, and when the whole world became one single field of activity; when politics and history became more and more cosmopolitan, and the isolation and seclusion of the different countries and continents gradually became a thing of the past.

The contact between the East and the West was nowhere closer than in India, and here, if anywhere, we might reasonably expect to be able to see the results of the contact. It is easy to discover them in the material changes during the past century. We can also see how European ideas were largely adopted and assimilated by educated Indians. And I think that we can also trace them in some features which are characteristic of the religious development in the 19th Century. It is about this aspect of the phenomenon that I should like to offer some remarks

During its history, India has more than once been partially subjected by foreign conquerors, even if we do not take into account the first Aryan invasion which was of such fundamental importance for Indian civilisation. But, down to about 1000 years ago, such conquests have scarcely left visible marks behind. The Indian people were in possession of a spiritual culture which proved stronger than that of the various invaders, who gradually became quite Indianised.

Then came the Muhammadans, who entered India both as conquerors and as propagandists of their own faith. They brought about a cleavage in the population, which is still apparent at the present day, and though these foreigners also became Indians, and though Muhammadan conceptions have perhaps played a certain rôle in the religious notions of men like Kabir and Nanak, it is at present difficult to trace a really new colouring in the mentality of the Aryan Indian as a result of his contact with Islam. There was more of conflict than co-operation and interpenetration.

A similar result is to be noticed in regard to the first European attempts at exploiting India. The Portuguese came with the double aim of winning riches and of preaching the gospel of Christ. The result was some Indian converts and a small ethnic element of mixed descent. But it is hardly possible to point to any interchange of religious ideas, or indeed of any perceptible result of this Christian propaganda. It is easy to understand why such was the case. In Indian civilisation religion has always played a prominent part, and the leaders of Indian thought have not been inclined to allow themselves to be influenced by ideas and conceptions which were avowedly in conflict with their own, especially when they were backed by physical power. The Indian thinker is open to conviction, but not to force.

Then came the English, who did not try to interfere with the people's beliefs or customs but were content to trade and to conquer. They stuck to their own faith and left the Indians to do the same. Therefore, to begin with, the two currents did not show any tendency to mix. There was aloofness, but not conflict. And in this aloofness the germs of mutual respect

found their soil. It was not long before the leading Englishmen felt the necessity of seeking contact with the Indians at many points. It was, for instance, necessary to study Indian law and Indian customs for the purposes of administration. And this soon led to a closer personal intercourse between leading Englishmen and Indians. English scholars, moreover, showed a keen interest in the ancient Indian civilisation, and they tried their best to learn from the Indian pandits. Mutual respect has always proved to be the surest way to understanding and sympathy, and there soon came about a collaboration between educated Indians and Europeans, which was destined to lead to important results.

Just as the English had gone to school with the Indian scholars, so also did the latter begin to think that they could learn something from the Englishmen, even about things dearest to their heart, for was it not possible that the attitude of the English towards Indian religions might be dictated by the same feeling as was all along found in the *Bhagavadgita*, and even in the *Rigveda*, that God is the same behind all the different names. There were perhaps not many Indians who actually reasoned in this way. But ideas and conceptions are often present as vague impressions before they are clearly formulated. And early in the 19th Century there did appear an Indian who soon gave adequate expression to the thought.

There are not many names in modern Indian History which more deserve to be remembered with gratitude than that of Rammohan Roy (1772-1833). Already as a child he showed that to him religion was a reality and not a form of outward worship. He had to leave his home, because he could not reconcile the numerous ceremonies of orthodox Brahmanism with the craving of his spirit. He became homeless, and during his wanderings he tried to grasp the truth of all religion in intercourse with the particular religious conceptions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity. When at length he was 32 years of age, he repeated with firm conviction the teaching of Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita*, that there is only one God, who is worshipped in all religions. At the same time he

did not fail to realise that there were also accretions and unessential elements in every religion, and that it might not be the case that every word in ancient sacred tradition was literally true. When he approached the age of 40, something happened in his nearest surroundings, which showed him that such was actually the case, even in India. His brother died, and his sister-in-law ascended the funeral pile and was burned to death with her husband's corpse. Rámmohan's heart ached as he felt that this ancient custom could not be in accordance with God's will.

Rámmohan Roy went to the scriptures, and he found that they did not authorise this rite of *Sati*. His eyes were opened. He knew from the history of Christianity that a reformation may sometimes be required, and he soon found that current Indian religion also might be in need of revision, in order that it might be purified and reformed. He did not, however, jump to the conclusion that it was fundamentally wrong, and though he was deeply impressed by Christianity, and especially by the personality of Jesus, he never suggested that his people ought to adopt the religion of Christ. On the contrary, he turned to the Upanishads and found in them the noblest and most exalted expressions of truth. He translated them into Bengali, and in this way, and through numerous other writings, he came to exercise a great influence on the development of the Bengali language, which is largely indebted to him for the high position it occupies to-day.

It might seem that such idea of a critical examination of sacred tradition could very well be of purely Indian origin, and it may be mentioned that Rámánuja did the same thing, when he went to the Brahmasûtras and the Bhagavatgîtâ in order to prove his view of Eternal Reality. There cannot, however, be any doubt that Rámmohan was influenced by his knowledge of the history of Christianity. And his attitude is, after all, different from that of Rámánuja. He believed in one Truth and one God who was revealed in all religions, and he was quite prepared to turn to other scriptures, *e.g.*, the New Testament, for enlightenment about questions dealt with by the Upanishad. He did not feel himself bound to the letter, but always looked

for the spirit, and he knew perfectly well that not everything which is old, and has been accepted by generation after generation, must therefore necessarily be true.

Rámmohan Roy's attitude is, in a way, a revolt against the worship of authority, which has so often framed the religious mentality, not only in India but all over the world. The Buddha in his teaching also refused to recognise the authority of the Vedas. But then his case is entirely different. He believed that truth had revealed itself to him, in its purity; for immediate intuition has in India been considered, since the oldest times, as the highest realisation,—and he simply proceeded to expound the truth as he had seen it, and thus founded a new religion. Rámmohan did not lay claim to direct revelation. He was a man of the modern age, who used his own intelligence and his own heart as tests of the ancient scriptures, and in so doing he showed to his compatriots how the beliefs of their ancestors could be reflected in the modern mind and thereby be reborn; how the superstitions and later unworthy accretions could be eliminated therefrom, and yet the old fundamental notions held firm.

Every religious tradition abounds in things which the modern man cannot accept; nevertheless only the superficial critic will draw therefrom the conclusion that the religion itself is at fault. In the East as in the West there have been many who have made this mistake, and it is well for India that a man like Rámmohan became the leader of the modern development, when the influence of the West began to make itself felt in Indian thinking. He was too great a personality to be blinded by appearances, and he was too deeply imbued with Indian religiosity to become dazzled by the apparently more modern tenets of Christianity as preached in the 19th century. I am not sure that Rámmohan's importance has always been realised in India. I have been told that some people have found fault with him because he had come under the influence of European thought. Such critics, however, overlook the fact that religious ideas are not mathematical formulæ, with a meaning which has the same value at all times. There is progress and development in human civilisation, in which progress all the civilised peoples of the

world have their share. And religious ideas have also their life and their growth. The same formula does not mean the same thing to us as to our ancestors. Modern man is a child of his time, and his mental horizon can no longer be entirely shaped by the development within one single country.

Two alternatives open to Rámmohan were, either to accept the tradition as it was together with everything in it against which his inner self revolted, or to throw it overboard entirely. He could not do the former, and he was wise enough not to do the latter. He knew that a religious belief is not like a dress which can be worn or changed at will. With a thousand threads is the religious belief of to-day connected with inherited notions, which cannot be thrown away without injury to the deepest human feelings. Rámmohan therefore showed the way to a renewal of ancient Indian religiosity in a shape which is not repugnant to the modern mind, and though the precepts of Jesus may have brought more than one Indian over to the Christian camp, there are many more who have learnt from him to find rest and hope in the belief of their fathers.

Rámmohan was, as you all know, the founder of the Bráhma Samáj, which has not, it is true, many enrolled members, but which has nevertheless exercised an unexampled influence in Modern India. It has become one of the most important centres of those efforts which aim at creating a modern India, without severing connexion with the past. Rámmohan's successor, the noble and unselfish Debendranāth Tagore (1817-1905), carried on the work begun by the founder and won new friends for the young movement. The purity of his life and the nobility of his character secured him a firm place in the estimation of his people, who still speak of him as the Maharshi. His religious mentality was of the same kind as Rámmohan's, and his conception of God, who should only be worshipped in the spirit, was unitarian in its wideness. But he was none the less thoroughly Indian, and he saw in the Upanishads the purest source of religious truth. He was still more convinced than his predecessor that Christianity could not give India what it needed, and on the whole his leadership meant a distinct strengthening of the national base of the Samáj.

It is of interest to take note of this, because it is typical of the whole development. Foreign elements may be assimilated, and there may be visible traces of a strong impulse from outside, but the Indian framework is so substantial that it overshadows the whole.

Still more interesting from this point of view is the third great leader of the Brahmo Samaj, Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884). He was not a thinker and philosopher of the same kind as Rāmmohan and Debendranath. He was much more of an enthusiast, full of faith and emotional fervour. The ideals of the Brahmo Samaj had not only appealed to his intellect and reasoning, but made a still stronger impression on his heart and feelings. While serenity and exalted harmony are the outstanding features in his predecessors, it was the fervent enthusiasm and the emotional inspiration in Keshub Chandra which brought everybody who came into contact with him under the charm of his rich personality. Under Rāmmohan the Vedic hymns were not chanted in the same room where low caste people were present, nor by other than orthodox priests. Keshub Chandra revolted against such restrictions. He would not wear the sacrificial thread, he began to officiate himself, and all were admitted to the service. His enthusiasm for reforms carried him further still. He founded the Calcutta College with English as the medium of instruction, and held that it was necessary to open the door for the ideas of the West, in the interest of the religious life of India, and he also advocated social reforms with zeal.

Gradually, Keshub Chandra's aims were modified. What was needed, was not simply a reformation and purification of the ancient Indian religion, but a new faith, and more definitely than his predecessors he thought it necessary to widen the horizon so as to take in religious truth as found in foreign systems. He asked his compatriots to hasten to the gospel of Christ, at the same time laying stress on the fact that the home of Jesus was Asia and not Europe, and in his *Ślōkasamgraha* he included religious texts taken not only from Indian, but also from Christian, Muhammadan and Chinese sources. It was really a unitarian religion which he advocated and it would seem as if

we were here faced with a natural result of the contact between the East and the West : a creed based on the religious growth of the whole world and not limited to the spiritual realization of a definite people. Cosmopolitan enthusiasts would be likely to rejoice at the idea of such a result, and in the religious literature of European liberalism the Brahmo Samaj has played a considerable rôle, as a noble instance of a unitarian creed, based on lofty and sound ideals, which might be adopted by the whole human race. That was not however to be the destiny of the Brahmo Samaj. Outside of India it has not won proselytes, and in India itself its development seems to me to have been going steadily back towards Indian ideals.

Keshub Chandra finally became a mystic, a visionary, who received direct injunctions from God. He felt his own relationship with the seers of old, who had realised truth by direct intuition, and though he continued to praise Jesus with his old fervour, he also began to speak of the message of the Indian Mother : the idea of Sakti became living in him. Towards the end he began to look even on the current worship of the Indian people in a different light. He recommended pilgrimage and he dropped his opposition to the worship of images, because these were nothing else than symbols of the different aspects under which the Eternal One could be viewed. Though Keshub Chandra always remained a believer in the one God, it is thus evident that his conception of divinity more and more received an Indian colouring. There is only one God, but that does not mean the same thing as the warning given by Christians against believing in other gods besides their God. It is rather the idea of the Bhagavadgita, that the same eternal God reveals himself to man in all the different shapes in which the human mind has conceived divinity.

The development of the Brahmo Samaj, as this was evolved out of the intercrossing of Eastern and Western notions in the 19th Century, seems to me to teach us two different things.

In the first place a unitarian creed will naturally take its colouring from the spiritual atmosphere of the individual nation within which it gets a footing ; and I would like to add that it can never become a living faith unless it does so, because it

will otherwise remain a mere formula, without the living contents which the emotional growth of a people brings about. I therefore think that every attempt at creating a really universal creed through a fusion of the religious ideals of the different peoples and civilisations will always result in failure.

In the second place I believe that we can draw the inference that a people like the Indian, with a long and rich spiritual development, has nothing to fear from the influence of foreign civilisations, and need not shut the door against Western ideas. They will not overgrow the national substratum, but may become like a looking glass, reflecting it in its purity, free from the impermanent accretions which have grown up through the vicissitudes of its historical development. It conduces only to the good of men to be rubbed against other men.

Besides, the policy of the closed door is not any more possible in the modern world. No nation can shut its eyes to the fact that there are other nations, with their different interests and ideals. Seclusion will lead to starvation, not only physically, but also spiritually. Just as we have to import foreign goods and adopt foreign inventions, we must also accept such thoughts and ideas as are useful for us. We must all the while, however, take care to maintain a certain equilibrium between exports and imports. A too great excess of the former is a sure sign of poverty.

But then the question presents itself whether we should accept as final the conclusions that there is little or no hope of uniting the ideals of the East and the West in a common creed, which may lead them on to exert themselves for the sake of higher and universal aims; and that, on the other hand, the time has passed when the individual peoples can carve out their destiny independently of the rest. The consequence of such an attitude of mind needs must be an acquiescence in the state of things which finally led to the great war: an embittered competition and struggle for material ends, and I know that there are people who believe that such would be the case in future, until the present social structure collapses.

But signs are not wanting which point in a different direction. We have learnt that there are, after all, numerous

things which are of common interest to all the nations of the world. And everywhere we seem to perceive a reaction against the materialistic conception of life and life's aims which are rapidly spreading in the past century and which had such a large share in the events that led to the great war. We hear how the Christian world is putting fresh energy into the work of spreading Jesus' gospel of peace; the Buddhists of the East have planned a world-wide propaganda for their religion; and Muslims hope to see Islam spread over the whole world. In all these movements we often see a tendency to adopt the methods in vogue in the past century: competition and struggle for supremacy. The immediate aim may not be, in this case, to acquire power and prosperity, but the main endeavour nevertheless is to win over as many people as possible to our special faith. And the question naturally presents itself: will not this spiritual competition repeat itself in the struggle for wealth and influence, as happened in the past century?

I well know that the leading idea in every kind of religious propaganda is the firm belief that one's own religion is the only one which can lead to final emancipation and bliss, and a fervent wish to open this way up for the whole human race. I also know that a great and well-established religion has a tendency to lay stress on certain tenets which cannot well be accepted by everybody in the same sense. Moreover, the history of religious struggles in the past is not calculated to reassure us in regard to the future. I do not think that we can rely more on the new creed, which has of late been preached as the only way to save the human race from the misery brought about by the mentality prevailing in the part,—I mean Bolshevism.

I do not overlook the fact that Russian Bolsheviks do not profess to conduct a religious propaganda, and they have often been represented as the enemies of religion. Nevertheless, their aims are essentially religious. Like the old Christians, and others they want to bring about the millennium, and believe that this can be achieved in this world, if only man can be filled with the right faith. The methods are also the same as in ancient forms of religious propaganda: suppression and force and terror. Bolshevism is a religion, but it is a return to the

primitive religious conception, according to which life's highest aims are prosperity and welfare in this world. It makes little difference that Bolshevism aims at bringing about the prosperity of the masses at the expense of the few, instead of *vice versa*. I firmly believe, therefore, that the Bolshevik gospel is just as little calculated to bring humanity what it needs, as was any of the struggles of the past, or any form of competition between the various religions which we may witness in the future.

But there is another way. Each people, each civilisation can make an attempt to purify its highest ideals, in the light of the spiritual aspirations of the others, and then all of them can join together in the promotion of such aims as are common to all. There must be no abandonment of individuality, nor must any individual be missing, because then the harmony would be incomplete, and for the same reason there must not be any patronage of one by another, but a free co-operation of civilisations and nations, where each is able and willing to give of its best. Each must be allowed to do so with all the weight of its individuality, a reservation which it becomes necessary to emphasise because we have become so accustomed to neglect those who cannot hold their own. This is the way pointed out by *Visva-bharati*, Rabindranath Tagore's gift to his nation and to humanity.

Visva-bharati has been described as an international university, but it is not meant to be an ordinary centre of research, like the old universities of Europe. Research is to be carried on with a human interest and without bias or prejudice. And the aim is partly of a practical kind: to train Indians to greater efficiency in agriculture and handicrafts, to teach them how to prevent and to combat diseases, etc. I should like to say in this place that I have been much impressed with the excellent work carried out in connexion with the *Visva-bharati* in its department of rural reconstruction, called Sriniketan, in Surul.

But this is only a part of the whole, and the leading idea is a much wider one. It has been evolved under the impression of the world-wide disaster brought about by the great war and the mentality which led to it, and it is the result of a fervent wish to create a new atmosphere in the world, as the only means

of avoiding a repetition of the disaster. Power and might cannot remain the highest aims of the peoples of the world. Man will never cease to strive for material prosperity, it is true, and his endeavours for such purposes will lead to material progress and further the development of human civilisation, as they have done at all times. But man must learn to understand that his own interests are intimately bound up with those of other human beings, and also that riches and wealth can never satisfy the innermost cravings of the heart. Its ultimate longing goes beyond them, towards the universal sphere of harmony and bliss, towards transcendency. And it is only this higher realisation which is able to sanctify life itself, and to make man feel that he has done justice to his innermost self, because he is not only an individual but also a man, with higher ideals and broader aims.

The Indian conception of what the Christians call God is based on the idea of eternal truth which manifests itself in everything that transcends phenomenal existence and changing actuality. It is truth, transcendent reality itself, which is the underlying notion. And this eternal truth is the ultimate reality in every individual, in every nation. Man must learn to realise this, and the first condition is that he must learn to acknowledge it in others. Respect for his fellow-beings and sympathy with their highest longings is the necessary condition of the Indian conception of divinity. Visva-bharati therefore tries to extend the mentality which meets us in Indian *bhakti* so as to comprise the whole human world. It invites men from all parts of the globe to come together, in mutual respect and good-will, in order to learn to know each other, as human beings whose ideals may differ, but who all belong to one higher Unity.

But, as its Founder knows, this aim cannot be achieved unless each civilisation, each nation, is able to present its highest ideais with all the strength and power of its individuality. The immediate aim of Visva-bharati must therefore be to strengthen the spiritual force of Asia and especially of India, so that its high value may become apparent to the whole world. That is necessary for the sake of India, as for that of the world which has shown a tendency to overlook what

is weak. While, therefore, I cannot help looking on the Visva-bharati as connected with the movement, which can at the present day be observed everywhere, for making India strong and powerful, it must not be lost sight of that the means aimed at is not to develop a spirit of contention and competition, but one of co-operation in order to widen man's horizon and teach him to look beyond the interests of the moment, and even those of the individual person and nation, towards the higher sphere where all men can meet, in mutual respect and good-will, for the promotion of the happiness of the whole world.

India, where the idea of *ahimsá* had its home, has her mission in the world, but cannot fulfil this unless she puts her own ideals, undiluted and unmixed,—such as are purely Indian—into the scales. She must remain *herself*, for the sake of the world, as well as for her own sake. For she must make certain that, in the harmonious concert of the world to which we look forward, her own tune is not missing.

It is a small beginning which has been made,—we who have worked in the Visva-bharati know that only too well. But we also know that spiritual ideas cannot die, if they are filled with truth. They will live and sprout, and when the powerful political constellations of the present day have crumbled to pieces, they will survive and shape the future. We confidently hope and we firmly believe that Rabindranath Tagore's ideal is an eternal truth, and not only a dream, that the day will come when the world will speak of him, not only as a poet, but still more as a prophet, and above all as a healer, who has laid the world under deep obligation in showing the way towards good will, towards harmony, towards peace.

DADU THE MYSTIC.

By TARA DUTT GARIOLA.

There is difference of opinion as to the date of the birth and parentage of Dadu. According to Pandit Chandi Prasad, whose edition of Dadu seems the most authentic, Dadu was born in a Brahmin family at Ahmedabad on the 8th lunar day of Falgun Sambat 1601 (1544 A.D.)—that is to say 26 years after Kabir's death—and died in 1660 (1603 A.D.) at the age of 58. His father's name was Lodi Ram.

There is likewise very little authentic evidence about the early life of Dadu. According to the scanty information available, he was a weaver, or cotton cleaner by profession and belonged to the Kabir-panthi Vaishnav sect. He has reverentially referred to Kabir and his doctrines in several places in his essays and songs. There is a dispute regarding his Guru. According to Wilson, Dadu was fifth in descent from Kabir, and his Guru's name was Budhan, thus: 1 Kabir, 2 Kamal, 3 Jamal, 4 Vimal, 5 Budhan, 6 Dadu. According to Pandit Sudhekar Dube, he was only second in descent from Kabir, being the disciple of Kamal son of Kabir. But in his essay on the Guru, Dadu says that God himself placed his hand on Dadu's head and initiated him into his mysteries.

Dadu left about 52 disciples, out of whom twenty were famous and wrote mostly in imitation of Dadu's poems, the most famous of them being Sunderdas, a great Sanskrit scholar who wrote on various religious and moral subjects. A careful examination of the writings of these disciples has convinced me that though Dadu refers to Kabir with much reverence, as in the following words: "Kabir's words are true and it gives me supreme joy to hear them. They confer true happiness",—this does not necessarily show that he was in direct descent from Kabir.

Some anecdotes about Dadu serve to throw light on his character. Once Dadu had shut himself up in a grotto for meditation. Some one closed the door of the cave and kept him

confined there for over a week. When the door was opened Dadu, instead of being angry, blessed his tormentor saying that he was grateful to him for having kept him in a state of divine contemplation so long. On another occasion a mahomedan fanatic gave him a slap in the face. Dadu blessed him and expressed his concern lest, by hitting his head, the assailant's hand should have been hurt. This faculty of merging his own consciousness in that of others and the resulting forgiveness may compare with the character of Christ who prayed for the men who crucified him.

Dadu travelled far and wide in Northern India, the Punjab and Rajputana, preaching his doctrines, and singing his songs of divine love in the languages of the places he visited, which he picked up as he went along. His sayings are current in such different languages as Gujrati, Hindi, Punjabi, Jaipuri and Persian, over all of which he seems to have had great command. There are a few hymns of his in Sanskrit also. Dadu did not sit down to write his poems. He sang when in ecstasy, or when questioned on any subject. His disciples took down his words and subsequently arranged them in two classes : *Banis* or moral essays and *Sabdas* or hymns. The first consists of essays on moral and religious subjects, the second of hymns set to music. There are altogether 5,000 verses in both.

Before discussing the philosophy and religion of Dadu, it will not be out of place to give a brief summary of his teachings as found in these essays.

He says, "O Dadu, Ram is fathomless, his form and colour cannot be known. Faith in his name is the only way to know him. God's nature is love; it is his body and his very existence. Yea, it is his very colour." Dadu thus points out the practical way of knowing God : "Turn the mind inward and see the Atma within. There dwells the universal soul. See it there. Keep thy mind fixed there." Duality exists so long as there is egoism. No sooner does egoism vanish than duality likewise ceases to exist. The individual soul and the universal soul dwell together in the heart. When the soul sees God it becomes dissolved into Him. In the presence of God shines the light of millions of suns and

moons. The effulgence of the universal Lord is incomprehensible.

To attempt to express the bliss of God's vision is as futile as the effort of a dumb person to express a sweet taste. Philosophers become bewildered at the wondrous nature of God. God reveals himself only to the blessed few through his grace. In the fifth essay Dadu makes the following practical suggestions for the concentration of the mind. "Know God to be real wealth and then all other things will become unreal. Knowing this truth turn thy mind constantly towards the reality. Know God to be within thine ownself. Restrain the mind from going outward. Keep thy mind fixed on the in-dwelling spirit and sing his glory. Then the mind will begin to dance before God. By constantly fixing thy mind on him, thou wilt surely find him at last."

In the essay on Maya, Dadu says that the world is false and exhorts men to wean their minds from it and fix it on God, who alone is true. Just as by touching metal with an ordinary stone,—instead of the philosopher's stone,—it cannot be converted into gold, so the world is deluded by the worship of personal gods and forgets Rám who is in their own heart. Just as by making a sun of stone, darkness is not dispelled, so our ignorance cannot be removed without the true knowledge. People make idols of stones and call them the creator. They see not the truth and hence are drowned in the ocean of Maya. Brahma is one, while the countless beings are produced by the qualities of the body. It is no use visiting places of pilgrimage, when God is in one's own heart. If you wish to see God, worship him within your own heart with full devotion, shaking off all sense of duality.

Dadu belonged to the *Bhakti* school of Mediæval Hinduism. He was essentially a mystic and like his forerunners, Nanak Surdas who flourished in the latter half of the sixteenth century and his contemporary Tulsi Das (1532-1623), preached the doctrine of divine love. But while Surdas, Mira Bai and Tulsi Das belived in Krishna and Ram as the incarnations of God, and while their training and ideas lay more among the orthodox traditions and learning of Hinduism, that is not so

with Kabir, Nanak and Dadu, who while accepting the Hindu theological and spiritual principles—their notions of God, the soul and devotion,—based the authority and source of their faith in the heart of man, on its intimations and longings. Like the mystics of other countries they boldly criticised the formalism, ritualism, sectarianism and hypocrisy of their age and preached the doctrine of universal love. Their songs are outbursts at once of rapture and love for their fellow creatures. They explain in popular language and by means of homely similes, the great spiritual truths which they realised and the vision of God which they achieved and thus express in forceful and simple imagery the deepest metaphysical truths. As Dadu says, in his essay on the Eternal Word, 'The world is pregnant with divine truth, if one reflects on it.'

Reading Dadu's works over and over again, we find fresh joy and illumination at each reading, and are drawn towards the path of God. The words of Dadu are hardly capable of being translated into a foreign language. Their fine aroma evaporates and their divine music loses much of its magical effect in the process of translation.

Although Dadu was not learned in the modern sense, his power of intuition, which in its higher unfoldment becomes spiritual illumination, was great. This intuition, as defined by Ralph Waldo Trine, "is a function of the spiritual nature which conveys to the mind impressions and knowledge from the Divine centre of our being!" Dadu's language is simple and his style homely, but there is exquisite music in his words, which goes deep into the heart and vibrates there, producing ineffable joy and solace.

In the kingdom of God there is eternal bliss, the pairs of opposites do not exist there. There is neither sorrow nor suffering, neither desire nor hatred, neither doubt nor egoism. There the lover ever sings the glory of the beloved and is intoxicated with his love. There the lover dances with his Beloved and worships His feet. He hears God's most excellent words. There the trees bear the fruits of immortality. There the devotee is finally absorbed in his Beloved.

Dadu's philosophy is essentially practical. He avoids all

dogmas and metaphysical discussions, and gives practical hints how to follow the path of God. The most essential requisite is to purify the mind by keeping it fixed on Hari and doing good to others. Dadu lays the greatest emphasis on the cultivation of divine love. Just as the *Chátak* caries for rain and the fish dies without water, so dies a devotee yearn to see Hari.

God's devotee should be meek, he should be free from egoism, passion and distress. He should concentrate his mind on God alone as the *summum bonum* of life. But it is not necessary to retire from the world. In fact Dadu condemns that in severe language. The true worship of Hari is in the heart, whether you live at home or go abroad. Ceremonials, pilgrimages, and penances lead to egoism. The best way to seek God is to withdraw one's own heart and worship him there in quiet.

Dadu accepts the orthodox doctrine that the whole cosmos has been produced from OM—the eternal Aye—and will be finally dissolved into it. This body is like a musical instrument and the OM is the sound which it gives out. The eternal Aye created the five senses through which it vibrates. What wondrous music the Lord has created! By meditating on the Eternal Word, and doing good deeds and worshipping Rama in his heart, man crosses this ocean of Maya.

Dadu's conception of Mukti or emancipation is absorption in God, in spirit, in this very life. He does not believe in the release after death. Dadu's definition of release is the true union of a lover with his beloved. He says. God's devotee and God are one in essence. Such a release necessarily involves the disappearance of individuality and complete absorption in God.

According to Dadu, the mind assumes various forms and experiences and countless sensations of pain and pleasure within itself everyday, under the influence of its qualities. All the various forms which man is said to assume in succession according to his actions, such as a pig, dog, jackal, tiger, or snake, are merely the different phases of the mind according to its quality. So long as the mind remains a victim to those

influences of its qualities, the cycle of rebirth continues. The transmigration of the mind ceases only when it is fixed to God and goes not elsewhere. This theory of transmigration is peculiar to Dadu, though not in conflict with the orthodox Hindu doctrine.

Closely connected with trasmigration is the doctrine of Karma. Dadu lays great stress on the performance of actions as means of purifying the mind. Dadu extols the virtue of benevolence. Disinterested action is one of the chief pillars of his religion. Dadu spent his whole life in serving humanity by preaching and personal example. He loved Hindus and Muhammadans, high and low, alike, as being the handiwork of his beloved Ram. He showed practically that man can realise the highest spiritual truths without renouncing the world.

Dadu was opposed to the founding of a new religion. His chief mission was to reform and purify the existing religions. His disciples and successors, however, founded a new sect called "Dadupanthis". Dadu has summed up his religion thus: I follow the path which is free from duality and believe in the One without form. I like to look upon all as one and think all as my ownself. Cherish no desire in thy heart and love the supreme Brahm. In another hymn, the Lord discloses to Dadu the principle of true religion in the following concise words: 'Effacement of self; worship of Hari; purity of body and mind: love of all beings as thine ownself: O Dadu, this is the essence of true religion.'

Although born in troublous times of political upheaval and religious persecution, Dadu preached his immortal doctrine of universal love to all alike, entirely unaffected by his environment. His high spiritual vision made him indifferent to the surroundings. His overflowing love of his God and humanity made him kiss the hand that smote him. He saw his beloved Lord in all beings, high and low alike, whom he loved like his ownself. His life was dedicated to the service of all beings. Nay, he wished his body to be of use to birds and beasts even after death.

We append below a few of his characteristic songs in free translation:

Batohi, chalna aj ki kali.

O, traveller, sooner or later thou must start upon thy journey,
Why considerest thou not? Why sleepest thou at ease?

O, heart, take refuge in Ram.

1. As the bird percheth on the twig of a tree to rest for a moment,
so do men spread all their wares on the stall of this world; and soon
make their exit one by one.

2. There is no real friend of thine in this world: lose not the wealth
of thy heart (for the sake of any such):

Let not this world deceive thee.

It is like the flowers of the silk-cotton tree.

3. Neither this body nor riches are thine, why dost thou hug them?

Dadu saith: Thou canst not rest in peace without Hari: awake and
see.

*

Sajni rajni ghatti jai.

O maiden, the night is passing away:

It decreaseth every moment, until, it is day-break:

Reconcile thyself to thy Beloved.

1. Why sleepest thou so long and so peacefully?

The opportunity is passing. If thou miss him in this life how canst
thou find him again?

Afterwards thou shalt have to repent.

2. O Fair One, why dost thou sleep whilst the Lord awaketh?

Arise, repent and grasp His feet.

Approach the merciful God with supplications; and embrace him from
head to foot.

3. How fortunate is the bride who is blessed with the increasing
love of her Bridegroom.

Dadu saith: She alone is thrice blessed, who hath found her Lord,
the King of all kings.

*

Kabahun aisa birah pawe.

Ah! oft do I long so for my Beloved that I am like to die unless I
see Him.

1. O maiden, harken to the tale of my agony.

I am restless without my Beloved.

As the fish tosseth about without water, so do I find no repose without the Beloved.

2. In my intense desire for the Beloved I break into song day and night, I pour out my woes like the singing bird.

Ah! who will take me to my Beloved?

Who will show me His path and console my heart?

Dadu saith: O Lord, let me see Thy face, even for a moment, and be blessed.

*

Panthire bujhe birhani kahani pio ki bat.

Saith the Lover: Tell me, O traveller, about my Beloved.

O traveller, when will He come home and meet me?

1. O traveller, where dwelleth my Beloved?

Where shall I seek Him? and where shall I find Him?

Where and with whom doth He live? and what doth He do? Tell me, O traveller.

2. O traveller, where shall I see my Darling?

Take me unto Him who sustaineth my life.

3. Gentle sleep kisseth not her weary eyes,

She tosseth about restless, day and night.

Dadu saith: How can the uneasy lover find peace in the hours of the night?

*

Gawahu mangal char.

I will celebrate this auspicious day with joyful songs: my dream hath been realised; my Beloved hath returned home.

1. All the maidens, with pitchers of faith, filled with the water of love, on their heads, are wending their way, singing, All hail! O Lord of the Universe.

2. His body shineth through and through in the infinite glory of millions of suns.

The lover seeth the home-coming of her Lord with a buoyant heart.

3. The fair maiden adorneth her body and cometh into the presence of her Lord, saying, "My Beloved hath come to my house; I will offer my body and my soul to Him".

4. The Unconditioned, Glorious, Supreme God appeareth in human form and danceth merrily, as the lover singeth His glory. *

5. The Bridegroom cometh to meet His Bride and embraceth her.

Dadu saith: The fair maiden was right glad and became dyed in His ever-lasting colour.

*

Thus saith the Holy God, the Creator and Author of all that is good, I and my devotees are one—we are One in essence.

1. He giveth up everything for my sake, he ever meditateth on the Infinite and respecteth the name of the Blessed Lord.

2. He cannot live with veil drawn between; he fainteth instantly, like a fish which dieth without water; but reviveth again when the waters return.

3. As water mingleth with milk; or water with water; as salt dissolveth in water; so doth the individual soul mingle with the Universal; no duality remaineth then.

*

Hari nam dehu niranjan tera.

O Hari, give me faith devotion and love of Thy holy name: let my heart overflow with Thy love.

1. Give me gentleness in speech and meekness. Let me enjoy the elixir of Ram's name.

2. Give me renunciation, detachment, devotional love, purity of heart and truthfulness.

Give me the thought-gem of devotion to Thy feet.

May I hold them firmly in my heart.

3. Give me contentment and modesty; let my heart be firmly fixed in Thee.

O Thou, the Indwelling Spirit, awaken my heart and let it be in communion with Thee.

4. O Mohan, give me knowledge and contemplation: let my heart have constant communion with Thee.

Dadu saith: O merciful God, let Thy supreme Light shine in my heart.

*

Jai Jai Jagdish Hari.

All hail! O Lord of the Universe, Thou are Omnipotent. Thou createst and destroyest the whole Universe: there is none other save Thee.

1. O Lord, Time and Death implore Thy mercy and Yama, (the Lord of death) is the bondsman of Thy Maya.

2. All-devouring Death feareth Thee; my heart is in great fear.

3. All those that fetter us with the snares of this world tremble before the Creator, Who destroyeth the enemies that are within and without us, Who comforteth us and removeth all obstacles from our path.

4. The Lord watcheth over us; He is also within us:

Dadu saith: The servant of Ram is free from all dangers and feareth none.

*

Sain ko sanch piyara.

The Lord loveth the truth:

Truth is agreeable to the true:

The Creator alone is true.

1. The hammer-stroke forges the real metal, while the dross drops off. The true metal alone can bear the hammer-strokes; while the baser metal breaks down.

2. As by assaying gold in fire, all the alloy is burnt away, so the Real alone can endure the test but not the unreal.

3. As by heating butter in fire and boiling it, the essence alone remaineth, while all the impurity burneth away, so truth alone can endure the ordeal—the true will safely pass through it.

Dadu saith: Verily the truthful alone can see God, but not the false.

*

Aj hamare Ramji sadh ghar aye.

My Ramji hath come to this beggar's house today.

1. Everywhere there is rejoicing and festivity.

2. I will raise a platform and strew it with pearls; and grind the sandal paste for Him.

3. I will offer my body, mind and wealth to Him: I will walk reverentially round Him.

4. By service, devotion and the waving of lamps will I propitiate Him.

5. I will offer my head to him as a sacrifice. With faith and devotion will I drink of His love.

6. O friend! I am happy, for I have found the Ocean of Bliss.

Dadu saith: I have seen the Great One, and found the Lord of the three Worlds.

*

Chalo man mera jahan mitra hamara.

O heart, hie thee to where my friend dwelleth : there, birth and death are unknown.

1. There is neither attachment nor ignorance, neither mine nor thine : there is no round of birth and death. There, the soul is not encaged in the body and doth not die. Time worketh no change and life is not shortened there.

2. In that region of immortality the immortal Beings dwell. Disease and sorrow are unknown there.

3. It is the Kingdom of God ; there none quarrel or run away ; they enjoy eternal peace.

Dadu saith : The absolute Holy God alone existeth there ; He alone is my friend.

*

Tahan ape ap Niranjana.

There, the God absolute dwelleth by Himself.

There day and night do not meet.

1. There is neither earth nor sky ; neither the sun nor shade There is neither air nor water ; there is the Omniscient alone.

2. There the sun and the moon do not rise ; and death bloweth not her trumpet. There pain and pleasure cannot enter. His dwelling place is unapproachable and unseen.

3. There, death cannot affect the body ; and none sleepeth or awaketh there.

4. There neither virtue nor vice exist : there the unknown Absolute Being alone dwelleth.

5. There the Lord, who pervadeth all hearts dwelleth in peace.

Dadu saith : Meditate on Him, who filleth all space, at the confluence of the three streams.

*

Tuhi mere rasna.

Thou alone are the taste of my tongue.

Thou art the tongue, ears and eyes.

1. Thou are the soul within the body : Thou art the mind ; Yea, Thou art my all in all.

Thou alone dwellest in my heart, and in my breath ; Thou art the life within my body.

2. Thou fillest my whole body from top to toe; Thou fillest my heart like water.

3. I have none but thee.

Dadu saith: Thou alone art the life within me.

*

Rahasi eku pawan-hara.

The Creator alone will endure ; though the whole world pass away.

1. The sky and the earth will pass away; also the air and water.

The sun and moon will pass away, the whole universe will pass away.

2. Day and night will pass away; yea, even Yama's abode will pass away.

Cruel death will also pass away; this whole universe will pass away.

3. Heaven and Hell will pass away; and all the dwellers therein also will pass away.

All joy and sorrow will pass away; our poor actions too will pass away.

4. The unstable passeth while the stable endureth, yea, the whole creation will pass away.

Dadu saith: Verily, the Indestructible alone will survive; while the rest will crumble like a pot of clay.

*

Aisa tatt anupam, bhai.

O brother such is that incomparable Essence;

It neither dieth; nor can anyone kill it: Death devoureth it not.

1. Fire cannot burn it, the sword cannot cut it, and force cannot move it.

2. The unconditioned cannot change;

It is not affected by heat, cold or water; it rusteth not.

3. It is neither reduced to dust nor is it dissolved in the thin air: The one changeless essence filleth all space.

4. Such is the incomparable Essence:

Dadu saith: Why dost thou not take refuge in Hari?

*

Tako kahe na pran sambhale.

O listen, why dost thou not take refuge in His name?

The millions of sins, which have gathered round thee during the countless ages shall be washed away by it in a moment.

1. The fetters which have tied thee for innumerable lives shall be burnt down by it without fire.

O hear me, such is the name of Hari: No pain can torment him who repeateth it.

2. That thought-gem will protect thee with tender care as that wherewith the mother rearereth her child.

Dadu saith: Verily, such is the grace of His Name; The snares of men are destroyed by it.

*

De darasan dekhan iera.

O Lord, let me see Thy face; then will my heart be in peace.

O Lord, Thou knowest my agony; how can I hide it from Thee? My heart knoweth no peace until I see Thee.

1. O Lord, my heart acheth: how shall I rid me of the pain?

O Lord, stretch out Thy helping hand to me.

2. O Lord, every part of my body is in pain. Why dost Thou torment my soul which dieth already.

3. O Lord, I lie alone on this bed and yearn to see Thee.

*

Allah Ram chhuta bhram mora.

The illusion of Allah and Ram hath been dispelled from my mind; Since I see Thee in all I see no difference between Hindu and Turk.

1. Both have the same soul, body, blood, flesh, eyes and nose: they are all the handiwork of the Lord.

2. Both hear with their ears, and taste with their tongues, both feel hungry and are endowed with the same intelligence.

3. Both have similar likes and dislikes; and both feel pain and pleasure alike.

4. O Creator, O Hari, all this is Thy handiwork; Thow makest no distinction.

Dadu saith: Knowing this truth my mind is in peace.

*

Bhaire gharhi men ghar paya.

O Brother, I have found my real home within this very tabernacle.

God pervadeth it in every part. The true Guru hath shown the path which leadeth unto it,

1. I have searched the whole house; I have seen the Self within the self. The doors of his Tabernacle have been thrown open; and the Everlasting Place hath been revealed.

2. Fear, difference and doubt have all disappeared; and my mind is fixed on the Truth.

God dwelleth at the place where the soul passeth beyond the body.

3. He is unchangeable and immovable; Him have I seen in all.

I have set my heart on Him alone; there is none other but He.

Him alone have I found to be the beginning and the final rest; my mind goeth not elsewhere now.

Dadu hath been dyed in His colour alone and is absorbed in Him.

*

Mulsinnohie badhe jyun bela.

Dadu will find a blessing in offering himself as a sacrifice to Thee.

Water the root, then the creeper will grow.

That quint essence—the tree in itself—dwelleth alone.

1. Those who go about visiting various gods and goddesses and are puffed up by drinking the poison of desires, wish for pleasures, but in reality have their necks caught in the noose,—the Diamond soon slippeth out of their hands.

2. Some worship with much ceremonial and concentrate their minds; they see the image alone; but know not the truth.

They pluck leaves but know not the right method of offering them.

In this wise are the selfish led astray.

3. They go on pilgrimages and keep fasts; but cannot subdue their desires; they go to forests; but even there they are not happy.

Thus do they consume their bodies by performing various kinds of penances; they wander about restless and waste their lives.

4. Doubt cannot be removed without the help of the true Guru: Yea, He breaketh down all snares.

Dadu saith: Verily, when the Guru showeth God within the self, the Supreme state is realised.

THE DYNAMIC ELEMENT IN INDIAN RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT.

BY PROF. CARLO FORMICHI.

I.

I have been teaching Sanskrit in Italy these twenty-five years, and in order to avoid the risk of finding no auditors I was compelled, through the whole of my career, to make the study of Sanskrit both easy and attractive. I had every year to start from the teaching of the *devanāgri* alphabet, and thereupon to select texts that might arouse the interest of my hearers. I must grant that, in spite of my love for the Indian classical language and literature, it was a hard sacrifice to be obliged to repeat over and over again the elementary rules of grammar and to have to deal always with beginners.

My sacrifice, however, as is the case with every sacrifice, did not fail to get its reward, for I never knew the sad sensation of lacking eager disciples, and I am proud to say that not less than five distinguished scholars who hold at present University Chairs for Sanskrit in Italy, were one day my pupils : Professor Ballini and Professor Pizzagalli at Milan, Professor Belloni-Filippi in Pisa, Professor Tucci and Professor Rocca in Rome. This result encourages and convinces me that I must not change my method and that on going back to my country I shall have to resume my wonted work of bringing up beginners and of sowing over and over again the same seeds. "How poor," says Shakespeare, "are those that have not patience."

Still, you may easily imagine, my friends, what relaxation it is for me to have no need for patience, at least for this one year. Here I am among you who are not beginners, but more or less advanced students in Sanskrit, some of you even Sanskrit scholars of the first order. I have not to start from the alphabet, but I am allowed to speak about the ultimate results of my scientific researches. Do not expect from me discoveries of new texts or an exhibition of vast scholarship. I shall limit

myself to interpret well-known texts on which I have meditated for long years, and let me tell you at once that meditation, namely, penetration into the heart of a subject, has been and will ever be what appeals most to my nature.

My thankfulness for those that gather raw materials, or put them in order, knows no bounds; for without collectors of facts science would never advance. But, at the same time, this collecting of facts must have an end at a certain point, whereupon quite another kind of work becomes indispensable. Just as a Beethovenian symphony reveals its inmost harmonious secrets only gradually, so that the more frequently it is heard the more one is able to discover them, even so must a hymn of the Rigveda or of the Atharvaveda, or a passage of an Upanishad be the object of long and repeated meditations before one can hope to understand them thoroughly.

There is an intense knowledge that cannot absolutely be a broad knowledge. This intense knowledge is what the Chandogyopanishad calls the *alpavidyā chittavatī*, and I acknowledge that my motto is the beautiful passage of the same Upanishad:—

Yadyapi bahuvid achitto bhavati nāyam astityevvainam āhur yad ayam veda, yadvāyam vidvānettham achittah syād ity, atha yady alpavich chittavān bhavati tasmā evota susrūshante chittam hyavaishām ekāyanam chittam ātmā chittam pratisthā chittam upasveti (VII, 5, 2).

Let a man know a great deal: if, however, he has not insight, they say of him: "he is worth nothing, in spite of all he knows; for were he really a sage, he would not thus be lacking insight." On the other hand, let a man know only a little: if he has but insight, they listen to him; for insight is the meeting point of those (things we were speaking of), insight is the Self, insight is the prop; insight thou hast to worship.

The result of my meditation on well-known texts is, that there has always been in India a dynamical factor in the history of her religious thought, a factor that saved her from falling a victim to any tyranny of mechanical rites or philosophical systems and allowed her to go through all possible religious experience until the summit of wisdom was reached in the

Upanishads and in Buddhism. The lectures I intend delivering to you will, I hope, give you the proof of the existence of this dynamical factor.

There is no doubt that your most ancient book is the Rigveda, and that we have to start from it. And just at the outset, we are confronted by a very serious problem : the age of the Rigveda. We cannot assign to it any definite date, and western scholars cannot forgive India her lack of historical sense. What Indian tradition can say about the age of the Rigveda is simply this : that it was composed in the year 3102 before Christ, at the beginning of the Kaliyuga.

Instead of positive and ascertained facts India is always ready to offer a legend, a myth, poetical and imaginative reports. Not even a single name represents the historical author of a Rigvedic hymn. Visvamitra, Vasistha, Atri, Agastya etc. are all mythical names. The hymn No. 104 of the 9th mandala is said to have been composed by two *Apsarás* ! Is it possible to find out historical evidence in such a jungle of fantastic statements ?

How is India to be studied and understood ? Have we to accept her as she is or shall we force her to say what she has not said and wanted not to say ? Western science did not hesitate a moment and, so far as concerns the Rigveda, did at once try to bring in history and displace myth, fix figures and numbers where these are lacking, remove shade through light. Western science said : India will learn the historical and critical method from us and will have to apply to us to understand the riddle of her Sphinx.

Nothing can be more interesting than this kind of duel between dreaming India, that looks at things *sub specie æternitatis*, independently of time and space, and the western hemisphere busy collecting, ordering and interpreting the facts of reality.

The weapons used by western scholars were formidable and of the purest steel : the historical and critical method, the comparative criterion, the turning to account of every detail, of all possible hints. How much time is likely to have elapsed in the linguistic evolution from the Vedic dialect to classical

Sanskrit and from the religious Rigveda notions to the tenets of early Buddhism, how the long debated question of the *nakshatras* which are mentioned in the *Jyotisa* is to be solved, how and when was writing first employed in India,—these and other problems were attacked with an enormous amount of scholarship, methodical accuracy, wonderful patience and acumen.

Accordingly, Max Muller detected that four periods are to be distinguished in Vedic literature: *Sûtras*, *Bráhmaṇas*, *Mantras*, *Chhandas*; and that between each of these periods and the preceding one an interval of nearly 200 years is to be conjectured. Taking the historical date of Buddha's death as the *terminus ad quem*, namely the year 480 before Christ, we reach retrospectively the date of 1,200 for the ancient hymns of the *Rigveda*. Max Muller's conjectures aroused a great deal of criticism, but, in the main, western science accepted his conclusions. After much discussion the *Rigveda* has gained three hundred years more backwards, so that the term of 1,200 has receded to 1,500.

Professor Oldenberg, who is one of the greatest authorities in Europe for Vedic studies, writes in his *Religion des Veda* that 1,500 is the remotest date to be assigned to the *Rigveda* though, he honestly adds, all our calculations are wholly uncertain. Professor Oldenberg acknowledges that Western calculations are wholly uncertain, but still they have a certain weight for him, while the Indian legend of the outset of the *Kaliyuga* as the date of the *Rigvedic* hymns seems to be of no value at all in his opinion, for he does not even mention it. The calculations of science, even if uncertain, are always to be taken seriously, while myths are myths and are to be completely overlooked.

The patient researches and the stupendous labours of Western philologists are to be highly praised and wondered at. On this point there cannot be the least doubt. Wherever work and self-denial are, merit and greatness are likewise there. Still one cannot help realising the disproportion between the huge effort that has been made and the meagre results that have been earned. After so much labour, so many subtle discussions,

inductions and conjectures, the date of 1,500 assigned by science to the Rigveda is as uncertain as that of 3102 of the Indian tradition. The latter, moreover, satisfies our inmost intuition much better than the first.

Professor Ludwig rightly maintains that for what concerns the Veda we are not allowed to go beyond the generic statement that it belongs to a remote antiquity and that we lack every *terminus a quo*. We add that there is absolutely nothing to give validity to Max Muller's conjecture that an interval of 200 years is to be assumed between Sûtras and Brâhmanas, Brâhmanas and Mantras, Mantras and Chhandas. The Indian mythical date of 3102 is almost to be taken more seriously than those arbitrary 200 years propounded by Max Muller.

A legend is always of more worth than a scientific endeavour to determine forcibly what is absolutely repugnant of any determination whatsoever. We lack any meter for measuring, even approximately, the number of years that must have elapsed from the Vedic dialect to classical Sanskrit, and from Vedic religion to Buddhism. There are too many psychological elements that assert themselves in all these questions, and the psychological elements do not admit of any measurement.

All the voice and the ink squandered on the question of the *nakshatras* and of the introduction of writing in India have hardly brought any light. As to the introduction of writing, Professor Buhler, of whom I am proud to have been the disciple, writes that Indians still prize the word which is spoken, much more than that which is written, the *mukhasthá vidyá* much more than the *pustakasthá vidyá*, even to-day, and that Indian modern poets do not so much wish to be read as to know that their poems have become the ornament of the throats of good people (*satám kanthabhúshana*). But even if we knew something quite definite on the date of writing in India,—that would take us no step further into the question of the age of the Rigveda.

In the duel, then, between dreaming India and waking West, the incorrigible dreamer has won. She has scorned and refused to be historically disciplined; she has remained in the atmosphere of mystery she likes so much; she seems proudly

to say: "If you want to discover and understand me, try to adapt yourselves to me rather than force me to adapt myself to you; give up the infatuation of trying to know everything historically, and then, only then, I am likely to lift my veil a little."

There is another point which deserves attention before attempting to detect and follow the dynamical element in the ancient religious thought of India. Our western civilisation has succeeded in separating religion from philosophy, philosophy from science, science from literature, and so on. We possess books that deal exclusively with one branch of knowledge: we call a man a theologian, or a philosopher, or a scientist, or a man-of-letters. But if we open the Rigveda, or a Bráhmāna, or an Upanishad, we find religion, philosophy, science, literature all blended together, so that we are at a loss to give the proper name to the author of a hymn,—we wonder whether we have to call him a poet or a theologian, a thinker or a rhetorician.

Our western civilisation has banished all that is superstition and quackery from its scientific and literary production, whereas on the contrary, all Vedic works are a mixture of a few sublime thoughts and truths and of an infinite deal of nonsense and imposture. Even the Mahābhārata, the Purānas, the Canonical books of Buddhism and Jainism, the Sāstras dealing with law, medicine and science, have all their gold almost hidden in a mass of dross. How are we, then, to use the Vedic religious materials? Shall we think that any of the so numerous Rigvedic hymns full of absurdities, inconsistencies and liturgic whims, is entitled to represent Indian thought no more no less than the *puruṣa*, or the *nāsadiya-sūkta*? Or are we to give a preponderance to these two *sūktas* and deem that we have to judge India from the exception rather than from the rule?

There is no denying the fact that on reading some Rigvedic or Atharvan hymns one cannot help discovering a close relationship between some absurd Vedic notions and customs and some analogous beliefs and practices of primitive and savage peoples. But, fortunately, you have hardly got to the end of those wretched compositions, before you chance to meet a hymn full

of lofty thoughts and of such deep poetical feeling as is not to be surpassed by any other exquisite piece of poetry of ancient or modern civilised peoples.

I think that these precious evidences, though few, must be quite enough to condemn as unfair and insulting every attempt aiming at reducing ancient India to the same level with primitive and savage peoples. Modern western nations might as well be compared with primeval clans, if all the superstitions, wrong notions and absurd customs of their country-people, concerning religion, medicine and interpretation of natural phenomena, should find admittance into their scientific and literary books. The official literature of western nations is the offspring of only a few cultivated and selected minds and is far from representing the main body of notions and beliefs of the bulk of the people.

In Indian literature the separation of what is mere gossip from the revelations of genius is quite unknown; and thus, from a certain point of view, Indian literature is more sincere than any literature in the world, and is nearer nature,—just as a wood is nearer nature than a garden. The similarity to be found between many Indian rites and the ceremonial practices of savages might be detected also in the most advanced nations of the West if only these, like India, had the habit of keeping their gold mixed up with the dross. That a common psychological basis is to be found in man, independently of his being civilised or not, is a fact not to be controverted; but it is to go too far if, from this fact, we infer a derivation of the civilised man from the savage.

Man hardly distinguishes himself from a monkey in the bodily structure, and this similarity led science, not many years ago, to state that man was nothing else than an evolved monkey. The fallacy of such a theory was not long in being confuted, and now-a-days nobody any longer believes that he is derived from a baboon, for man has got that in himself which the monkey never had, nor ever could develop even in *yugas* of evolution. Likewise the Indians have got that in themselves which, even in its embryonic stage, no savages were ever endowed with. I shall be ready to acknowledge the derivation of ancient Indians from primitive peoples the day that I shall

be shown the seeds of the *purusha*, or the *násadiya-sûkta*, in any notion or belief or rite of savages.

I have to make some other general remarks on the Rigveda before getting into the heart of my thesis.

We have said that the Rigveda is the most ancient book of India, but we have to add that it is the least representative of what we are used to mean by the word *India*. Rightly to know the place that we are to assign to the Rigveda it is necessary to point out first what it does *not* contain.

Can one conceive India without tigers, elephants or monkeys? And yet the tiger is never mentioned in the Rigveda, the elephant is spoken of as a rarity in only two passages (I, 64, F; IV, 16, 14), the monkey in one hymn only (X, 86). Can one conceive India without *nyagrodhas*, lotuses, or rice? The Rigveda wholly ignores the *nyagrodha*, gives no prominence at all to the lotus, never mentions the rice (*vrîhi*).

The most striking fact is that the Ganges, which represents the very blood of India, faintly appears only once in the Rigveda (Vi, 45, 31) and never in the Sâma, Yajur or Atharvaveda. We are tempted to ask: can a literary record be called Indian when it almost ignores the Ganges? I need not tell you what the Ganges is for India and to remind you of the more than hundred *slokas* in Parvan XIII of the Mahâbhârata, apotheosising it. I myself, who am only an Indian by the love I bear to this land of divine mystery and of human bounty, felt as one purified when at Kolaghat, near Calcutta, in the light of a glorious *ushas* never to be forgotten, the breeze that had come in contact with the sacred waters first blessed my skin. As are nights without the moon, trees without their flowers, so are the lands that lack *Ganga's* sacred waters. And let me frankly tell you that of all the Indian books the Rigveda is the one that appeals the least to my heart; and which seems to lack in the peculiar charm of India. The Rigveda is a book without the Ganges!

How little the Rigveda can be called genuinely Indian is moreover, shown by the absence in it of the social institution of castes and, above all, by its ignorance of two words which represent the greatest religious conquests of India, *viz.*, *samsâra* and *ahimsâ*. And when I say *samsâra* I mean to say *karma*,

the widest idea ever conceived by the human mind, for it embraces the material as well as the spiritual world and is as infinite as the infinite of which it proclaims the eternal law.

The Rigveda ignores the Ganges, ignores the universal and everlasting force of *karma*, sustainer of *samsāra*, ignores the eternal law of *ahimsā*, universal love. Does, then, the Rigveda deserve to be called Indian?

Some scholars have concluded that the Rigveda is not an Indian, but an Aryan, book and this is why it lacks all that is specifically Indian. They seem to forget the close relationship between the Vedic dialect and classical Sanskrit and to overlook the true reasons that account for the absence of any mention of the tiger, the elephant, the Ganges, and so on. In the time of the Rigvedic hymns the Indians were dwelling in that northern part of the country where the Indus flows. They could not, accordingly, know the Ganges and all the beasts belonging to a tropical climate. The geographical factor is paramount in determining, not only the social and political conditions of a people, but also their religious beliefs. Indians settled on the banks of the Indus had a religion which could not possibly be the same as what they had when settled on the banks of the Ganges and in the still hotter districts of the Deccan. The Indians of the Rigvedic period could not help being a war-like people living on cattle-rearing more than on agriculture, making the most of this life, and begging of the gods as the greatest boon a fair and good wife and as many male-children as possible.

Which are their gods and how did they worship them?

Thomas Carlyle says that if a man were brought up from infancy in a dark cave and then all of a sudden taken into this glorious world to see the sun rise, he would undoubtedly fall on his knees in adoration before the divine spectacle. Now, if we read some of the hymns to Ushas, we are much tempted to think that the Rigvedic man experienced just the same thrilling and intoxicating sensation as the man of whom Carlyle speaks. He had no prejudices, no scientific formulæ that could shut him out from the spontaneous adoration of dawn and sun, stars and moon, cloud and lightning, water and earth, fire and plants

mysteriously endowed with thought-stimulating, disease-curing or courage-inspiring juice. In fact his gods were called *Ushas Sārya, Varuna, Indra, Apas, Prithivī, Agni, Soma*. Accordingly, Roth, Adalbert Kuhn and Max Muller saw in the Rigvedic religion a worship of the principal forces of nature; and the only question for them was to decide whether gods personifying phenomena of light had a preponderance on those personifying meteorological phenomena, or *vice versa*. This was the first western interpretation of the Rigvedic religion.

But as the studies of Vedic texts became broader and deeper, it was universally admitted that many an obscure passage in the Rigveda had to receive light from the knowledge of the complicated, and in many parts absurd and mechanical, liturgic worship of which the Brāhmanas are the repositories. In the Rigveda there is not so much a question of inspiring, beautiful, natural phenomena as of sacrificial spoons, libations of clarified butter, fees to the priests (*dakṣhinā*), magic formulæ, and so on. In other words, in the Rigvedic religion the priest has already asserted his authority, has already succeeded in introducing the static principle aiming at crystallizing religion into a monotonous system of mechanical rites. This was the second Western interpretation of the Rigveda, and Abel Bergaigne in France and Hermann Oldenberg in Germany heaped up such a mass of facts and of brilliant conjectures as to put out of question the ritual character of the Rigvedic religion.

But, as it always happens, reason was not entirely on one side. Emboldened by the successful results of their method, both Bergaigne and Oldenberg busied themselves exclusively with the static element, and nearly forgot the dynamic one. They go so far as not to forgive the Ushas-hymns the responsibility of the wrong notions entertained until then about the Rigvedic religion.

Bergaigne writes in the first volume of *La Religion Védique* (page 242): "Les hymnes à l' aurore sont presque tous au nombre des plus poétiques que renferme le Rigveda. Ce sont même eux qui paraissent avoir le plus contribué à répandre dans le public les idées fausses qu' on y nourrit sur le caractère

général du recueil." * On the other hand Oldenberg writes a big volume of 608 pages in which he lingers on the description of every possible superstitious rite, while scarcely three pages are dedicated to poor Ushas.

And thus, from the exaggerations of the first western Vedic school we are led to those of the second one. I think, however, that the scholars who busy themselves chiefly with offering us the rubbish of the Rigveda and nearly hide from us, considering them as an encumbrance, the rare jewels that are strewn therein, are more to blame than those who call our attention to these same jewels without warning us that they constitute the exception and not the rule. After all, the saying that the first impression is nearly always the right one, holds good also in this case. Rudolph Roth, Max Muller and Adalbert Kuhn judged the Rigveda with more justice and equanimity than Abel Bergaigne and Hermann Oldenberg, in spite of the basis of a broader analysis and of fitter and more numerous instruments of research which the two latter could boast of.

What matters most is to point out the dynamical principle, the golden vein among the rubbish, the vital element among the heap of corpses. If among one hundred hymns only one has got life of feeling and of thought, this one hymn must have a greater weight than the remaining ninety-nine full of sterile symbols and liturgic nonsense. The first verse of the hymn I, 185 runs as follows: *Who is the younger, who the elder, of those two sisters? How were they born? Who, O seers, knows it? Anything that exists they sustain, and as with a wheel do they go round.* This one single verse which sets forth the problem of the origin of things with so much simplicity, is it not enough to make up for the great deal of quackery contained in many a liturgic hymn? If among the crowd of credulous shepherds, dazzled by the ceremonies of a sacrifice to Agni or to Soma, and listening with rapture, but no understanding at all, to the silly but sonorous words of a pedantic priest, even ten of them were able to detect the gossip and the imposture of the

*Almost all the Ushas-hymns are among the most poetical of those contained in the RV. They are likely to have most contributed to the spread of the wrong ideas entertained about the general character of the *Samhitā*.

pedant and the charlatan, and to understand the words of life coming from a true poet, was this not enough to rescue India from the bondage of ignorance and superstition?

India may have been wrong in not throwing into the fire two-thirds of her literature, but we Europeans, who are called to accomplish that work of sifting which India omitted to do, are still more wrong in judging India by those two-thirds and in behaving like a man who should scorn a mango-fruit on account of its uneatable peel. The second Western Vedic school has heaped so much dross on the gold contained in the Rigveda, that one can hardly find out the precious metal. And is it not just the reverse that we are expected to do, namely, to free the gold from the dross?

It is no easy task; for my part, it is the task I have always aimed at, even before I read Rabindranath Tagore's inspiring article in the Visva-bharati Quarterly of April, 1923. He also, at page 7 of that article, with his usual clear-sightedness and divining genius, speaks of a static and of a dynamic principle in Indian religious development, and so gave me the best encouragement I could hope for to go on with my further researches.

To conclude, the Rigvedic religion is a polytheism sprung out of the heart of a people that lived in close contact with Nature and who deeply felt themselves to be dependent on her. In such a polytheism undoubtedly the ceremonial rites and the symbolic liturgy preponderate over the everlasting creations of genius,—without, however, rooting them out wholly. The true poets are few, those capable of understanding them are few, but these few are quite enough to sow seeds and worthily to represent the genius of the race.

A religion like that of the Rigveda, founded on an intimate sense of relation between man and Nature, cannot help being permeated by a strong philosophic spirit. The very contradictions, the lack of discipline, the confusion, the anarchy, that are so prominent in the Rigveda, bear witness to this philosophic spirit. The singers seem to be at a loss to make up their minds

as to which god they have to grant their preference. In one hymn Indra obtains the foremost place, only to be displaced in a subsequent hymn by Varuna or Agni, Brihaspati or Soma. The triumph of a god is temporary, occasional; and this strange religious attitude of mind, unknown in other religions, has led to the forging of quite a new expression. We call this intermittent worship as the supreme one, of now this now the other god, by the term Enotheism, or Kathenotheism.

How is the origin of the world to be accounted for? Manifold is the answer in the Rigveda: perhaps it was Indra, or Vishnu, or Brihaspati, who modelled it as a carpenter or a smith does the wood or the iron in his hand (VI, 4-F, 3, 4; I, 154, I; X, F-2, 2); perhaps some father and mother, namely, Heaven and Earth, gave it birth (VII, 53, 2; I, 159, 2; 185, 2, 4, 6); perhaps fire, or water, was the womb of all moveable and immoveable things (I, 115, I; 161, 9; VI, 50, F); perhaps only Savitar knows whence the sea first flowed and we never shall find out whence Savitar himself derives all the good things he lavishes so bountifully on us (X, 149, 2; V, 48, 5). Who will ever know which of the two was the first-born, day or night (I, 185, I)? Does Indra really exist? Who has ever seen him (II, 12, 5; VII, 100, 3)? Besides worshipping the gods, would it not be advisable to honour and sing good men's meritorious deeds and exhort the rich man to compassion and charity, reminding him that he also, like the poor man, must die one day? Starvation is not the only way to death: the surfeited man himself dies (VII, 35, 4; X, II-F, I).

It is clear that we have before us here all possible philosophical tendencies; the Rigvedic singers are in turn polytheist, monotheist, agnostic, sceptic, stoic, philanthrophist; and no task would be more difficult than that of disciplining Rigvedic religion into a system. We have to deal with a chaotic mass of the most various religious elements, from the humblest and the most primitive to the loftiest and ripest. But in this *mare magnum* of contradictions, superstitions and whims, a wonderful spirit of freedom of thought asserts itself and warrants the advent of glorious enlightenment.

We may reproach the Rigvedic singers with every fault except that of entertaining dogmatic and theocratic notions. Their perpetual wavering between this and that god, their restlessness in belief and worship, means the working of a genuine philosophic spirit that had necessarily to end in some grand and vital creation.

And a grand and vital creation must be called the philosophic hymns of the Rigveda which are contained mainly in the tenth *mandala*, and which will form the subject of our next lecture.

THE INTERNATIONALISM OF ANCIENT INDIA.

By DR. KALIDAS NAG.

[*From a paper contributed to a Symposium on "The rôle of Internationalism in the development of Civilisation" invited by the Peace Congress of Lugano (Switzerland)*].

India enjoys the precarious privilege of possessing no systematic history well defined by Time and Space. She has passed, like every other country, through all the phases of historical evolution—sociological and religious, intellectual and political; yet with a peculiar obstinacy India has refused hitherto to develop a hierarchy of orthodox historians and a consistent tradition of national history. No doubt she has acknowledged from very ancient times the value of chronicles (*Itihâsa-Purâna*) as an intellectual discipline; but such compositions have remained, down to the appearance of the Muhammadan historians, as subsidiary to her proverbially rich contributions to Religion and Ethics.

To Western scholars, trained in methods of precision as applied to the intensive study of national histories, this apparent apathy towards the preservation of what they call "national glories" seems not only to be a little disconcerting but even derogatory to the prestige of the Indians as an intellectual people. Diagnosis of this peculiar malady led to the development of diverse theories: Lack of political cohesion and comprehension of national solidarity, oriental fatalism and obsession of hereafterism,—all these seemed to have combined to weaken the Hindu faculty of precision and thereby to sap the foundation of historical science in India. The present degradation of India was considered to be the cumulative effect of these national perversities, and well-wishers of India, both outside and inside, have sought to cure it by reconstructing her history on a national basis.

Without discounting the value of possessing a systematic

national history or disputing India's poverty in that department of literature, one may still plead that the judgment passed on the Indian people from such standpoint is nevertheless superficial and unjust. A people that could evolve, at least forty centuries ago, the earliest collection of human lyrics in the form of the Vedic Hymns, may be credited with a certain amount of creative imagination. A people that could present to the world, about 2,500 years ago, a scientific treatise on grammar like that of Pānini may aspire to a certain amount of analytical power and capacity for system-building. A people that could perpetuate through millenniums, the traditions of its religious, social and intellectual life—not through writing but by a phenomenal memory, may claim to possess some sort of instinct for precision and preservation. So it still remains a problem why such a people did not develop a tradition of national history in the special sense of our days. This is a paradox which has not been explained by the condescending theorists of the historical school.

It may not be an improbable hypothesis that the Hindus somehow felt history, with its interminable details of wars and treaties, of triumphs and dissolutions, to be but a poor portraiture of the real national life and a very unsatisfactory and imperfect reflection of its creative activities. They boldly challenged the validity of the *world of phenomena* and tried to discover the *world of permanence*, immutable beyond all phenomena. Revulsion from things transient and temporal produced almost an obsession of the Absolute and the Eternal. Thus India neglected History and developed Philosophy; or rather, she considered the quest of the spirit for the Eternal Verity as the real history of Humanity. Thus whilst her next-door neighbour China was quietly laying the foundation of early science and inventions; while Babylonia was developing the earliest astronomy and legal code; and while Egypt was composing her "Book of the Dead" and was trying to triumph over Death by her titanic architecture,—India was steadily scaling the supernal heights of Human Philosophy—the Himalaya of Thought—and was filling the world with the reverberation of profound questions about Existence and Non-

existence, Death and Immortality—fundamental problems of human life—through the Vedic Hymns :

There was not the Non-existent nor the Existent then,
 There was not the air nor the heaven which is beyond,
 What did it contain? Where? In whose protection?
 Was there water, unfathomable, profound?
 There was not Death or Immortality then,
 There was not the beacon of Night nor of Day.
That one breathed, windless, by its own power
 Other than *That* there was not anything, beyond.

(Rig Veda X, 129, i, ii.)

Descending from the heights of primitive speculation, when India was confronted with the problems of complex life, in and through the expansion of her Society, she subordinated *Economics* to her science of Equity and Jurisprudence and *Politics* to her science of Ethics. Thus she developed her *Dharma-sāstra* and *Rāja-dharma* with *Dharma*, the Eternal, as the mainstay of her secular history. This obsession of the Eternal in her temporal life has its counterpart in the obsession of the Universal in her national history and that of the Formless in her æsthetic discipline, creating mystic forms and symbolic language. So Hindu apathy towards History is the effect of a malady that is deeper than the diagnosis of our modern historians. It is a triple complex which some future psycho-analyst may disentangle in order to satisfy our curiosity!

Meanwhile I beg leave to trace the influence of the Universal on the history of India, to indicate the landmarks of Internationalism in her national evolution and to point out, by suggestions and implications, if possible, the specific contributions of India to the development of International History. In an age, wherein international hatred threatens unfortunately to be the order of the day, such a study may not be without profit, not simply for the transvaluation of historical values but for ascertaining the warning gesture of the profound *Past* to our muddling *Present*.

The first and unfortunately the most tenacious fiction of Indian History is the glaringly unhistorical hypothesis that India grew up in "splendid isolation." For the fabrication of this fiction we have to be thankful as much to the narrow outlook of late Hindu orthodoxy as to the erroneous picture of primitive Indian society drawn by the early school of occidental philologists. While acknowledging fully the value of the works of these scholars in the decipherment of the ancient texts, we cannot forget that the outlook of these new types of *Pundits* were generally limited by those very texts which engrossed their attention. Thus frequently too much emphasis was laid on particular aspects of Indian life as suggested by some special terms or words, and too little regard paid to the general historical evolution.

Words are valuable as landmarks in the progress of society, but for that very reason they are but *static symbols* of the ever-changing and ever-expanding life. So the fancy picture of a caste-ridden India, cut off from the rest of the world by the external barriers of the ocean and the Himalayas as well as by the internal prohibitions of a morbid, all-excluding cult of purity,—India ever chanting Vedic hymns or celebrating occult sacrifices, weaving transcendental philosophies or absurd reactionary principles of life,—fades away as soon as we view it from the vantage ground of History. Truth is not only stranger but stronger than fiction. The chance-stroke of the spade of an archæologist makes short work of heaps of scholarly theories. So the discovery of the inscription of Boghaz Keui in 1907 by the German archæologist Hugo Winckler led to the explosion of the "Isolation" theory and expanded to an unexpected extent the horizon of Indian history. Here, for the first time, we read the startling fact that in far off Cappadocia, in the fourteenth century B.C., two belligerent tribes—the Hittites and the Mitannis,—invoked the Vedic Gods, Mitra, Varuna and Indra, while concluding a treaty; moreover, the special twin-gods, the *Nasatyas*, were invoked to bless the new marriage-alliance concluded between the two royal families.

Thus, by a curious coincidence, this first concrete document in the history of Indian internationalism, represents the Indian

gods as the peace-makers and harmonisers of conflicting interests; and as such, we consider the Boghaz Keui inscription not only as a landmark in Asiatic history but also as a symbol of India's rôle in the development of internationalism through *peace* and *spiritual unity*. This is, as we shall try to show, quite different from the *economic internationalism* of exploitation (*e.g.*, Phœnician) or the *imperialistic internationalism* of compulsion (*e.g.*, Assyrian and Roman).

We cannot forget that when the Indian gods appear for the first time in the symbolic role of Peace-makers in Cappadocia, Egypt is proudly proclaiming her world-conquests through the famous Victory Ode of Thutmosis III, cataloguing with sublime egotism the vanquished nations and countries. Further westwards, we hear about the same time (1500 B.C.) the Achæans thundering on the ramparts of the Ægæan capital Knossos (Crete), the collapse of the Minoan hegemony in the Mediterranean and the peaceful penetration of the crafty Phœnicians connecting the East and the West with a subtle tie of economic exploitation. The Achæan ascendancy, already weakened by the fateful Trojan War (1200 B.C.) as well as the Phœnician commercial empire began to give way before the onrush of the virile Dorians who, with iron weapons, inaugurated the Iron Age in Europe (1000 B.C.) vanquishing their predecessors of the Bronze Age; while in Asia, Assyria played the same role as that of the Dorians, pulverising the decadent nations with superior military organisation and efficiency.

What was happening in India in that epoch of transition from the pre-classical to the classical period of Western history with its interlude of the Epic Age, we have no definite political records to ascertain. But we have invaluable literary documents to attest the rapid development of Indian life and thought. From the Rigveda (the earliest literary monument, if not of humanity, at least of the Indo-European people) to the earliest *Brâhmanas* (1000 B. C.), Indian life had traversed quite a long path of sociological evolution. The Vedic Aryans were confronted with the same problem, presented to the Egyptians and Assyrians, Achæans and Dorians,—of an autochthonous people barring the way to the advance of a more virile expanding power.

And herein lies the originality of the Indian Aryans, that they solved the problem in the only lasting manner possible—by recognising the title of their rivals *to exist*, not merely as enemies but as collaborators in the building of a civilisation which we may call to-day as much Aryan as non-Aryan, Indo-Mesopotamian or Dravidian.

The Vedic literature being essentially sacerdotal, records but poorly this march of India along the path of historical synthesis. Yet, we get glimpses of the complexity of the picture here and there; the background is already *polychrome*; the crowding of canvas is already Epic. From the very beginning we notice the *white* Aryans engaged in tussle with the *dark* aborigines. Surely, the social and political problems thus raised were not removed by the simple utterance of *Vedic Mantras*! There were occasional conflicts and out-bursts of cruelties. The path was often red with "blood and iron." The atmosphere was often dark with horror and the Vedic poets seemed to have given vent to their feeling of suspense and agony during those awful nights in their semi-symbolical hymn to Ushas—the goddess of Dawn to be born in the womb of primeval Darkness :

Arise! the breath, the life again has reached us!

Darkness has gone away and Light is coming.

She leaves a path for the sun to travel,

We have arrived where men *prolong existence*!

Rigveda V. i. 113.

Yes, the aim of the Indian Aryans was to prolong existence not to extinguish it. And long before the formulation of the doctrine of *Ahimsā* (non-injury) by Mahāvīr and the Buddha. India demonstrated her *profound respect for life* by realising that principle in her early history. The Aryo-Dravidian synthesis will ever remain the first and foremost glory in her career of international amalgamation. Two nations, quite different in race, language and culture were fused to give birth to a virile stock of people and to lay the foundations of a great civilisation.

Needless to say that this was achieved through many conflicts and catastrophies which prepared the way for the Indian *Epic Age* with its formulation of the principles of *world power*

and world-empire (though the geography of that world was singularly different from our own!) Hence in the later Vedic literature as well as in the *Bráhmaṇas* we read frequently of *Sámrájyas* (vast empires) and *Sárva-bhauṃas* (great emperors). From that doctrine it is an easy and normal transition to the concepts of *Digvijaya* (conquest of world-quarters) and that of *Rája-chakravartin* (super-sovereign of the diplomatic circle). That naturally brought in its train wars on an epic scale, and martial ballads composed by contemporary bards and minstrels. And just as Homers and pseudo-Homers appeared several centuries after the Trojan war to give epic form to the floating legends and ballads, so the actual great epics of India—the *Rámáyana* and the *Mahábhárata*—were composed by our Válmíkis and Vyásás many centuries after the traditional wars between Ráma and Rávana, or between the Pándavas and the Kauravas, towards the end of the Vedic age.

So whilst the Vedic age was a period of tribal warfare and unconscious fusion of tribes and races, the Epic age was a period of strife between more extensively organised kingdoms and empires, striving after suzerain power. In this epoch the old principle of *amalgamation* underwent its hardest test. In both the Epics, we read a great deal about wars, but in none of them do we miss the *lessons of war* as they were imprinted on the heart of the ancient Hindus; the ultimate victory is always on the side of the righteous and even then, victory in a game like war is too much like defeat!

That shows clearly that even in the process of testing the principle of concord and amalgamation, in the very act of experimenting with a new method of discord and dissolution, the Indian mind was wide awake and open to conviction. Hence the poet of the *Rámáyana* makes the victor Ráma stand humbly by the side of his dying enemy to have his parting advice. Hence also, in the *Mahábhárata*, we find the triumphant Yudhisthira sitting at the feet of the dying hero Bhísma, to listen to the Canto of Peace as the only fitting conclusion to a war epic. Thus, confronting the actualities of war as a sociological experiment, its terrible consequences and tragic legacies, the Indian mind pronounced its verdict on war through the formulation of

new doctrines later on embodied in systematic treaties like the *Sántiparvan* and the *Bhagavadgítá*.

This sanity and this self-knowledge are indeed admirable. India tried the path of "blood and iron" and shrank back in horror and disgust. No doubt one school of thought continued to refine the philosophy of mutual suspicion and of the inevitability of war as a means of aggrandisement, and thus gave rise to the science of *Sádgunya* (sextuple methods of diplomacy) culminating in the atomistic politics of the *mandala* of the *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya which dominated the political thought of India in her periods of disintegration. Another school attempted to explain away the war philosophically by transforming local war into an allegory of cosmic war, thus giving rise to the grand philosophical poem of the *Bhagavadgítá*. While a third school candidly preached Peace, to be the only true sublimation of War and thus gave us the famous *Sánti-parvan* (the Canto of Peace).

The soul of India seemed to have been undergoing a travail for New Birth. The atmosphere was surcharged with a new agony, a terrific gloom which remind us very much of the age of the Vedic groping in the dark. Suffocating under that atmosphere of narrow egotism and shocking carnage, one section of the Indian mind sought and found liberation in the serene region of emancipated individualism (to which the Hindu mind always gravitates) and cried out through the deathless voices of the sages of the Upanishads, the message of this fresh Revelation :

Listen to me, O ye children of immortality...I have come to know the Great Person, like the Sun, beyond the darkness.

This solemn call was sent to the whole universe (*Visva*) for it was the result of the realisation of Him who is the All-feeling one (*Sarvánubhuh*). And this new aspiration did not remain a mere ecstatic dream but soon became flesh in an actual *Purusa*, a historical personality—the Buddha, whom India created out of the depth of her universal charity. Truth, that was burning in the heart of India, became incarnate. Dispelling with the radiance of Divine Amity the dark smoke arising from the bloody altars of sacrifice, both sacerdotal and political, Buddha

proclaimed the sublime paradox that *to gain all one must give all*, to avoid suffering one must eradicate the all-devouring Ego, the root of all suffering, and that real illumination is in the quenching of the flames of passion (*Nirvāna*).

The political history of Humanity is full of absurd gaps, stupid silences and illogical *lacunæ*! That is why we cannot explain satisfactorily the real significance of such grand historical revelations. But the history of human thought expresses itself by suggestions probably too subtle for our chronological apparatus. The unerring universalism of the Upanisads, the divine cosmopolitanism of Buddha, surely proceeded from some *super-historical*, if not historical need of Humanity. That is why, towards the end of our First millennium (circa 1400-500 B.C.), we find Buddha dedicating himself to humanity; Mahāvîr, the founder of Jainism, preaching *Ahimsā* (non-injury) as the noblest principle of religion; and, in the dark days of the Chow dynasty of China, Lao-tse and Confucius evolving respectively their grand systems: the *Tao-kiao* (School of the Way) and *Ju-kiao* (School of the Knowers) emphasizing the same principles of life: non-interference, suppression of ego, and purification of heart. So also in the land of the Iranian cousins of the Indians, the reformation of faith had been started a little earlier by Zoroaster; and now we are startled to read for the first time in an imperial autobiography on stone—in the famous Behistun and Nakshi Rostam inscriptions of Darius the great (550-485 B. C.):

Says Darius the King: for this reason Ahuramazda bore me aid, and the other gods which are, because I was not an enemy, I was not a deceiver, I was not a despot.

The last words of the Emperor of Asia were equally significant for the age:

O man, what (are) the commands of Ahuramazda, may he (make them) revealed to thee; do not err, do not leave the right path, do not sin.

Rastam ma avarada ma starava—The right (path) relinquish not, do not sin—these are the last words of the greatest

figure in world-politics towards the end of this millennium. are surveying.

The Persian empire under Darius the Great, touching India on the one side and Greece on the other, marked the apogee of the history of antiquity and the connecting watershed of the streams of the Ancient and the Modern history. It awakened the lyre of the first tragedian of Hellas, Æschylus, fighting in the field Marathon (490 B.C.) and composing his drama *The Persians*. It evoked also the genius of Herodotus the father of European history. Pursuing the age-old method of pulverisation, Persia battered at the decaying fabrics of the ancient empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia and they tumbled down like houses of cards. So the Achemenian art under Darius represented in traditional style the throne of the world-emperor carried by long rows of vanquished sovereigns.

At the same time the traditional political legacy of the *dream of world-empire* hypnotised Greece, the first rival of Persia in Europe. From Greece the epidemic infection contaminated Rome. Greece checked the military advance of Persia but had neither the political sagacity nor the spiritual insight to arrest the disintegrating politics of antiquity, represented in its last phase by the Persian imperialism. The Peloponnesian war destroyed miserably the noble prospect of consolidation opened by the Confederacy of Delos. Hellas, and with her Europe, preferred the fateful path of empire-building. Athens, Sparta, Thebes, all attempted it in turn, till at last Alexander of Macedon succeeded in traversing the same path of conquest from Greece to India. What appears as a splendid turning of the tables on Persia is really an ephemeral imitation of the Persian emperors; and Persian influence on Alexander is acknowledged by all, for it was highly resented by his hellenic compatriots.

World-empire may be a new ideal with the occident, but it is a dangerously old institution of antiquity. In spite of the unmistakable warning of ancient history as to the inevitable self-disintegration of such gigantic edifices resting on the precarious foundation of *force*, Greece under Alexander and Rome under her republican proto-cæsars and imperial cæsars, attempted the dangerous experiment, met with the usual tragic disaster and,

even in the very failure, left the fateful legacy of empire-building to all of their "Barbarian" successors, who are struggling down to this day, with varying degrees of success and permanency, with the same impossible, antiquated experiment of antiquity, of building a world-empire—a machinery of gain for a *few* at the sacrifice of the *many*, based on the quick-sand of selfishness and propelled by the inhuman energy of brute force.

With phenomenal originality, nay with divine inspiration, India under Asoka the Great (273-242 B. C.) suddenly developed an ideal of *Empire of Peace and Progress* for all. Within 250 years of the appearance of the great Buddha, India produced another historic personality. *Dharmásoka* not only contradicted with an unparalleled historical sagacity, the entire politics of antiquity up to his age but also, like a Spiritual Columbus, discovered a new world of constructive politics which, unfortunately, remains as yet only an aspiration and a dream for humanity. Behind him stretches the dead ruin of ancient empires; before him unfolds the tableau of lamentable duplication of the same selfish politics in our modern history; and in the centre lies the spiritual oasis of Asokan imperialism. The empire of Asoka, with its new philosophy of conquest by Righteousness (*Dharma-vijaya*) and its new foundation of universal Well-being (*Kalyána*), stands as the central climacteric of human history—at once a fateful warning and a divine inspiration for humanity.

Starting his career as an orthodox emperor engaged in the conquest of a territory (Kalinga) to the east of India, entailing the death of millions, Asoka had his first conversion as the result of that tragic contact with the actualities of politics. All in a moment he discovered his mistake; and not stopping there, like a truly great soul, admitted his mistake with a sincerity and a penitence rarely paralleled by any other character of history. His edict of Kalinga is the noblest monument of his magnanimity; he made his repentance a perpetual lesson to posterity by carving on the rocks of the ravaged Kalinga an account of his Imperial blunder. Through that awful suffering he arrived at that noblest of political revelations,—that "true

conquest consists in the conquest of men's hearts by the law of Dharma."

From that conversion and that revelation issued twenty years (261-242 B.C.) of humanitarian activities touching the frontiers of the Hellenic world on the one hand and of the Mongolian world on the other, building the *first great causeway of Love and Illumination* between the Orient and the Occident, the first code of progressive imperialism and the first basis of constructive internationalism. The great truth of Universalism which flashed as a *revelation* upon the Souls of the *Rishis* of the Upanishads, which appeared as an *incarnation* in the personality of the first World-man Buddha, translated itself into the Cosmopolitics of this first practical internationalist of history—Dharmāsoka Piyadasi, the well-wisher of all, proclaiming with divine simplicity: *Sava munisā me pajā*—the whole of humanity is my children—an echo of the saying of his master, the Buddha.

Thus in the same epoch that Rome, the mother and model of European imperialism, was pulverising her last oriental enemy, Carthage, in the Punic Wars, Asoka had been celebrating the Spiritual Matrimony between countries and continents. This was undoubtedly a new departure in world-politics and the opening of a new page in the history of humanity. Not satisfied with preaching his new revelations *inside* India, Asoka sent his missionaries of humanism to Syria (then under Antiochos Theos) to Egypt (under Plotemy Philadelphos) to Cyrene (under Magas) to Macedonia (under Antigonos Gonatas) and to Epirus (under Alexander). Apart from these names inscribed on his Rock Edicts of 257-256 B.C., we have strong traditions about his missions to Ceylon visited by his own son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitrā and even his mission to far-off Burma (Suvarna-bhūmi). For the first time in history, humanity witnessed the *humanisation of politics*; and India, through the hands of Asoka, showered her blessings of Peace and Progress over this symbolical union of Asia, Africa, and Europe with ties of true internationalism.

By the side of this grand achievement of Asoka, the military adventures of Alexander the Great, in spite of their voluminous,

may garrulous expatiations, appear quite mediocre so far as the sublimity of conception and originality in execution of a *world-idea* are concerned. Alexander, while acting as a splendid "Scourge of God" in punishing the decadent powers of antiquity, followed the traditional method of conquest in achieving the traditional ideal of autocratic empire. Thus, accidentally, he happened to be the founder of the Greek colonies which helped in the propagation of Hellenism, but consciously he might seldom be said to have worked out any definite order of human relationship helping human welfare. All the legends collected by later chroniclers about Alexander and the Indian Gymnosophists show how the Indian mind was not only not affected by the so-called martial glories of Alexander in India, but showed a somewhat disdainful pity at the sight of the cruel exploits of that Grand Barbarian.

As a matter of fact, as soon as his army, demoralised by over-exhaustion and by the dread of the great Gangetic empire of Magadha, turned its back on India, the so-called Hellenic conquest of Alexander was dissipated from the mind of the Indians as an evil dream. Soon after, Chandragupta Maurya (330-298 B. C.) the grandfather of Asoka, cleared the country of all foreigners and taught a good lesson to the second Greek invader, Seleukos Nikator, who was forced to cede the provinces of Paropanisadai, Aria, Arachosia and Gedrosia. A treaty to this effect was concluded about 300 B. C. strengthened by a matrimonial alliance,—a Hindu emperor marrying a Hellenic wife, in spite of the so-called caste rigidities. The Syrian court sent Megasthenes as an ambassador to the court of Chandragupta. Megasthenes left a valuable book—his *Indika*, and was replaced by Deimachos in the reign of the next emperor Bindusara (298-273 B. C.) who also received another envoy Dionysios sent by Plotemy Philadelphos of Egypt (285-247 B.C.), an ally of Bindusara and of his son Asoka.

Thus India through various political vicissitudes, through victory or defeat, was ever transforming the weapons of brute force into tools of human progress—art and literature, philosophy and religion. Her north-western frontier lands remained ever as a veritable laboratory of *Cultural Chemistry*. India has

demonstrated so far, that the political nomenclatures like the *Victor* or the *Vanquished* are misnomers. The real thing that counts and lasts for ever is human creation in and through human assimilation.

But now came the period when this principle of amicable international assimilation was put to the severest test. During the first half of this millennium (500 B.C. downwards), India had to encounter two nations that had a civilisation of their own—Persia and Greece. Fusion with them was comparatively an easy problem. But throughout the second half of this millennium (down to 500 A.D.) India was confronted with the problem of meeting the real Barbarians from Central Asia, surging down the Himalayas, and threatening to submerge civilisation in a deluge of savagery! Was India to make no distinction between the civilised and the non-civilised? Was she to follow still her policy of “the open door”? With supreme faith in her conviction about international amity India answered in the affirmative. Yes, she must allow every species of humanity to participate in her life and to test her principle. A law is either universal or nothing. Thus India remains faithful to her historical tradition, whatever may have been the fluctuations of her political destiny.

So when the barbarian Sakas began their trial of India's faith, India accepted, as she did accept and assimilate, the other branches of the barbarous races—the Kushans and the Huns. No doubt the instinct of conservation manifested itself in her stricter social legislation. The simpler social laws of the early law-books, the Dharma-sūtras, were amplified, sometimes showing inordinate rigidity (not always however ensuring or enforcing practice). Thus the great codes of Manu and Yājñavalkya of Vishnu and Nārada were all compiled in a systematic fashion by 500 A.D., and through them the Hindu mind betrayed its pre-occupation with the “untouchable *Mleccha* problem.” But actual history always defies the codification of Social Legislators as well as the admonition of Social Censors. Sacerdotal blockade or imperial barricade were alike futile against subtle sociological fusion. The Four orders of Society—the *Chaturvarnas*, in spite of their being very ancient and quite orthodox as

contended by Oldenberg (Z.D.M.G., Vol. 51) remained generally and especially in this period, *in a state of fluidity* and Senart had good reasons to assert that the *Caste System* was largely a social fiction.

Hence we find, frequently, glaring exceptions and anomalies, *e.g.*, Mleccha Kings or laymen,—our Usabhadátas and Rudradámans—posing as the Pillars of Orthodoxy! This has been conclusively proved with reference to concrete epigraphic documents by Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar in his brilliant paper, “The Foreign Elements in Hindu Population” (Indian Antiquary. 1911). The sudden invasion and the continuous infiltration of these savage foreigners into India produced at first an ethnic confusion (*varnasamkara*) and cultural disturbance which threatened to be cataclysmic. It is the phenomenal adaptability or vitality of Hinduism that enabled her to sustain that shock. It produced no doubt at first a laxity in her lofty discipline by the inevitable enfranchisement of diverse religious and social norms. But, in another way, that apparent lowering of her standard led to a grand enrichment of her cultural life and an unparalleled *democratisation of her culture*. India had already developed the discipline of Faith (*Bhaktimārga*) through the Bhāgavata sects of Vaishnavism (2nd century B.C.) for the foreign converts. The Bhagavad-gītā offered, through its philosophical muse, salvation by faith in one God :

“Leaving everything else aside

Betake thyself to my unique protection.”

And about the same time that the divine prophet of Judæa was putting to shame the whole decadent culture of the Greco-Roman world by his profound expiation for Humanity, India also was transcending her “little path” (*Hīna-yāna*) of individual salvation and inaugurating her career along the “grand-path” (*Mahā-yāna*) through her divine solicitude for the All-Being (*Sarva-sattva*). Her great poet-philosopher Asvaghosa, who composed a magnificent poem on Buddha, the first inculcator of universal amity (*maitrī*), also developed the philosophy of the All-Being as the ultimate goal of individual discipline, in his “Awakening of Faith” (*Sraddhotpāda-Sāstra*) which may be

accepted as a landmark in the history of Indian internationalism. Moreover, it was composed by a philosopher who himself was carried away as a part of a tribute imposed on his native city by the Barbarian conqueror Kanishka.

Thus, from the beginning of the Christian era, India started playing her rôle of internationalism, not only through her lofty academic philosophy or through the vigorous propagation of a royal personality, but as a whole people following mysteriously a divine impulse, an ecstatic inspiration to sacrifice the *Ego* for the *All*. This grand movement of cultural conquest, this noble dynamic of spiritual imperialism—a legacy of Asoka—soon won for India an inalienable empire over the vast continent, right across Tibet and China to Corea and Japan on the one hand, and across Burma and Indo-China to Java and Indonesia on the other. The history of this phenomenal progress has yet to be written.

Scholars, like Richard Garbe and Vincent Smith, agree with regard to the theory that Buddhism influenced the early development of Christianity which in its turn coloured some of the later Hindu doctrines and creeds. "Although (Asoka's) missionary effort did not succeed in planting Buddhist Churches in foreign countries (excepting Syria) its effects may be traced," says Mr. V. Smith, "obscurely both on the history of Gnostic and Manichæan sects of Christianity." So the great Egyptologist, Flinders Petrie, remarks after having discovered portraits of Indian men and women at Memphis: "These are the first remains of Indians known on the Mediterranean. Hitherto there have been no material evidences for that connection which is stated to have existed both by embassies from Egypt and Syria to India and by the great Buddhist missions sent by Asoka as far west as Greece and Cyrene. We seem now to have touched the Indian Colony in Memphis and we may hope for more light on that connection, which seems to have been so momentous for western thought!"

This spiritual conquest took place not only along the land routes. In this marvellous century Hippalus discovered the Trade-winds, the "monsoons" (79 A.D.) and thereby facilitated sea voyage. *Periplus of the Erythræan Sea*, an invaluable

journal of some nameless navigator of this age, saved for us by chance, proves the magnitude of the international trade in that epoch extending from Africa *via* India and the Malay Peninsula to far off China. Bold Indian mariners were starting to found their culture-colonies in Champa and Cambodge in Indo-China, and in the Malay Archipelago as far as Java. For Ptolemy, in his Geography (2nd century A.D.) already calls the Island of Java by its Indian name Jabadiu. So Professor Pelliot in his researches into the history of Fu-nan (ancient Combodia) finds traces of Indian culture there, already in the 3rd century A.D. and also notices the frequent mention of big ships crossing the seas.

So, on the one hand, the material wealth of India was rapidly developing an active commerce between India and the Western Worlds, through the Roman Empire, and on the other hand, the invaluable spiritual treasures of India were inducing her far stabler relations with the Eastern World. Bakarai (port of Kottayam, Travancore) and Bharukaccha (Broach), Vidisa and Vaisali, Tamraparni and Tamralipti, were big centres in this grand international circulation, so well reflected in the anthologies of popular tales and legends: the Jatakas, the Avadanas and the Katha literature of India.

By the side of this wonderful development of internationalism through free economic relations and spiritual exchange, the rise and fall of political governments and national empires sink into the second rate in importance. The profoundest changes in the life history of nations are often effected silently by agencies distinctly non-political. So we watch the simultaneous collapse of the Kushana Empire in India and the Han empire in China (*circa* 225 A.D.); we observe the rise of the Sassanian empire in Persia (226 A.D.), the establishment of the Gupta empire in India (300 A.D.) and the downfall of the Western Roman Empire as the result of the Barbarian invasions (487 A.D.). But through all these rises and falls of empires continues the silent fertilising current of International Commerce—economic as well as spiritual—leading to a phenomenal quickening of human thought and sympathy.

Through all these periods of political trials and vicissitudes India went on quietly with her work of internationalism; and about the same time that the Huns were to open another chapter of savage onslaught on her bosom, India was sending her sons Kumarajiva and Gunavarman to China to preach Buddhism while Chinese pilgrims like Fa-hien, Chih-mong and Fa-mong were coming to India to drink at the fountain-head of spiritual wisdom. India realises herself in a new way by transcending her narrow national limits. That is probably why the greatest poet of this epoch (5th century A.D.) Kalidasa, the brightest of the "Nine gems" of geniuses adoring the court of Vikramaditya, gives deathless expression to this profound longing of India for the world beyond the Himalayas, through his immortal poem of the "Cloud Messenger" (*Megha-duta*) addressed to the Beloved of the Great Beyond—symbolical of this cosmic passion of India in this golden age of Indian internationalism.

The real secret of India's success in her eternal pursuit of *Visva-bharati* is, that in spite of occasional lapses to militarism on the part of individual sovereigns, the Indian people as a whole, stuck substantially to the principle of Peace and Progress. They respected the individuality of the races and nations which came into contact with them, offering their best and evoking the best in others. And so India managed to leave a record of collaboration in the realm of the Sublime and the Beautiful, quite remarkable in world history. The political conquerors and economic exploiters may have been there too; but they never played a dominant role in this grand drama of Creative Unity. That is why, when the names of the great kings and emperors were forgotten, the people of these cultural colonies cherished with gratitude the memory of the services rendered by the innumerable Indian monks and teachers, artists and philanthropists—selfless workers for human progress and international amity.

THE ITALIAN EPICS

By PROF. GIUSEPPE TUCCI.

If struggle and war constitute the necessary element from which *epopœia* can arise, the Middle Ages were certainly the fittest period for the growth of epic poems,—nay, no period in the world history was more agitated and harassed. But from the shock of the armies, the collision of the races, the never stopping unrest of peoples, the desolation of burnt towns,—always destroyed but always rising again from their ruins to assert, as it were, the unchecked thirst after life which is innate in man,—the songs of the poet rough and artless, and yet not destitute of artistic expressiveness, arose to articulate and to eternize the anxieties and the hopes, the griefs and the glories of their country and their heroes. The people listened to their voice as to its own voice and when the bard sang its past dangers, or its victories, it felt that it was living over again the life of its forefathers, it acquired consciousness of its unity and of its goal, and prepared itself for new attempts. So it happens during all ages of transition.

The same thing we meet with in ancient Greece, where the Homeric civilisation also represents a civilisation of transition. The glories and the magnificence of the Minoan kings disappear with the last flashing of their Aegian palaces burnt and pillaged by the Dorian invaders. Centuries of barbarity and wars followed, during which, through the Mycenaean culture, the new immigrants came into contact with the remainders of older elements, and the first expansion of the Greek people along the shores of Minor Asia took place. When this fusion was accomplished, the storm had passed away, and the Greek civilisation was ready to start its ascent towards the highest conquests of art and thought, Homer came to sing the dirge of a dead world and to welcome the dawn of a new one.

History repeats itself. After the decay of the Roman Empire, Latin civilisation succumbed under the Barbarian in-

vasions; Europe became the battle-ground of races and peoples who came into collision with one another. The fusion of races and languages, the new religion, the decline of ancient conceptions, created new forms of life and new mental habits. It was a period of transition which, through blood-stained chaos, was trying to find its way and its new consciousness. But, as soon as the first empires and kingdoms began to arise, a new danger appeared in the Saracenic invasion. After the conquest of northern Africa and Spain, the Arabs were at the door of France, and from time to time made terrible incursions on the Italian shores.

The Latin world had become now a Christian world, and it was characterised by that deep faith which specially bad times know,—when people, having lost hope in this world find their only refuge in the consoling vision of a better future impossible to be realised on earth. Faith was life itself for the people: therefore they were fighting not only for their family and their country, but also for their spiritual life itself.

When Charles Martel faced at Poitiers (732 A.D.) the Arab army, the heart of all believers was with him, praying the Almighty for victory, anxious alike with fear and hopeful expectation. Charles Martel was victorious; and the simple, pious people felt that a new destiny had begun for them, they saw the grace of God in the victory. Rationalism had not yet routed imagination, religion permeated all aspects of life, everybody believed in the miracles and in the devil: God with his holy army of angels and cherubs had fought against the unbelievers. In this atmosphere, where reality and unreality blended, epics arose: it could not help being inspired by this decisive struggle and this triumph,—the inspiration rising to epic heights where they had suffered and feared the most: in France. The *Chanson des Gestes* was the epic of a new civilisation which, through its martyrdom of the Middle Ages, sprang from the ancient world as a bloody but heroic inheritance. Its poetry gave its welcome to the new Era, just as an unknown bard sang the war of the Pandavas and the Kaurava ushering a new Indian civilisation, and the Homeric poems did with regard to the Greek people.

But Italy, although permeated with the same religious spirit and agitated by the same preoccupations, did not produce, and could not produce, an epic poem. She had felt only as a mere reflex the struggles which France had fought, and she could not realise in all its value the grandeur of the event on which depended European destiny. She was divided into a number of small republics and states which could not rise from their particular interests to a large vision of common ideals. It is only in Dante that the conception of a real unity of our people, beyond its local differences, begins to appear. The communes and the political factions killed the consciousness that the Italians as a whole formed a nation, and that therefore they all had the same goal; and it is only this consciousness which can give to a people its real force of character,—this national feeling without which we cannot expect any epic.

In France the epic arose spontaneously among the people: in Italy we meet it as an importation from outside, therefore as an imitation,—more a literary feat than a popular expression. It was introduced about the 12th Century by an invasion of French bards who, attracted by the wealth of our country and the magnificence of our princes, came over to Italy singing at every opportunity, along the roads or in public festivities, the marvellous feats of Charles the Great and his Paladins.

Our people liked these songs, not only because it had a more or less vague consciousness of the historic importance of the struggles that were narrated, or because it was permeated with the same spiritual atmosphere, but specially because of the natural instinct, common in every man, of being roused into interest by everything beyond the ordinary course of human life. Poetry naturally gains the upperhand over the prose of every-day life because of the need that man has to break through all the ties of adverse circumstance and to rise on the wings of poetry into the realms of dream and illusion.

But these poems, however attractive they might have been to the soul of our people, could not become our own epics. The best proof here is, that the language also remained the original one, or at best was a curious mixture of old French and Italian vernaculars; as, for example, the so-called Franco-Veneto poems

which are written in a language half French and half Venetian like the *Prise de Pampelune* by Niccolo da Verona.

Of course we had anonymous imitators of these poems; but they were devoid of artistic value because they originated not from any spiritual urge, but as I said, by way of supplying the demand due to the great favour with which they met.

But, as it always happens, by being used only as a pastime and recreation, the poems lost every true epic character: the fantastic element took little by little the prominent place and the most impossible events constituted the real background, the making of "effect" was the main object. For the common people are naturally capricious; they will have their own heroes, their favourite warriors,—there are types which specially appeal to their soul.

Charlemagne's figure became gradually discoloured: Orlando, Tancredi, Ruggieri are some of the legendary heroes to whose feats a great poetic and popular literature was dedicated. But France, from which in the beginning Italian literature derived its inspiration and its models, had also another kind of poetry. Wars and fights were no more the background of these epics, nor is it possible to find in them any echo of the struggle against the unbelievers. The atmosphere is less tragic and dark, more delicate and human is the spirit which permeates these poems. The soft smile of the beloved replaces the clash of weapons: to the defence of country and fatherland, the romantic pilgrims of love seem to prefer the service of their Madonna. The new hero looks on the woman of his heart as the unique woman, to whose glory he dedicates his sword, to whose adoration he consecrates his life. The ideal of chivalry has its best and highest expression in these poems of the *Artu* cycle, in which the bloody and agitated Middle Ages appear to us in a light of unusual purity and unsuspected loftiness, as if they make up for their past errors and savagery.

These new poems, when they came to Italy, spread not so much through the populace which, with insatiable curiosity, flocked to listen to the new minstrels, as in the courts of princes and among the aristocracy. But the political conditions, and the very history of Italy did not allow even this kind of poem

to assume a national, an Italian character. In Italy German or French feudalism thrived only for a short time; very soon republics and communes dismantled the castles of the Lombard princes and the Anjoins checked the feudalism of the Norman barons. The Lombard *Carroccio*, which withstood the descent of Frederick Barbarossa, marks the decline of feudalism in Italy. As the forms of life had changed, so were the circumstances of our people different; the spiritual atmosphere was quite another; nor even could the Artu cycle—representing a dead civilisation which had disappeared without leaving lasting traces,—grow up and prosper.

But, if the two cycles did not survive among our people as epics, they did not disappear; they remained as fiction literature in the forms of novels and romances. The one cycle gave birth to the love romance: Giulietta and Romeo, Tristan and Isotta the Tavola rotonda are the typical examples of this literature, passionate and heroic, and yet imbued with a soft melancholy. The other changed into what we may call the adventurous romance, which maintained only the background of its ancient epic character, but in which the fanciful, the strange and the vulgar element gradually got the upperhand.

The times had changed deeply,—the classic culture, springing up, as it were, more living and provoking from a secular silence and from forgotten manuscripts brought again to light, revived the pagan ideal of beauty. The *beautiful* substitutes itself for the *sacred* and art invests all forms of life, an art which proceeds more from study and imitation than from a spontaneous and free *phantasie*, and cannot help therefore being recondite, bedizened, classic, and therefore destitute of that sublime simplicity which constitutes the charm of all spontaneous literature.

Our literature was growing up under the influence of classic models, in a country which was believed to be great only because its people were the scions of Rome. Intellectual life was to be found only at the courts of princes, or in the circles of the aristocracy,—the meeting places whereto humanists and men of letters, artists and poets flocked, selling the service of their pen and of their genius to the highest bidder. They were

in the field of letters what the *Condottieri* were in that of arms.

But under this blossoming appearance of the higher classes there was the mass of ignorant and miserable folk, without any will and without any energy, but changing from one master to another, always ready to bear the heavy burden of servitude with hopeless resignation. They were still permeated with the ancient ideas and principles, the religious feeling was living in them with all its exaggerations and awkwardness. They went to the holy ceremonies with a pious heart, they listened in awful despair to the apocalyptic sermons of Gerolamo Savonarola, and they took part in the wonderful feats of Rinaldo or Orlando that minstrels or bards were singing or reciting during their holidays.

It was a period full of contradictions and of spiritual restlessness, evidenced alike by the machinations of its politicians and the levities of its poets, but it was also a period rich with creative powers. But neither did the people suffering in slavish captivity, nor the high and cultivated classes pursuing only their particular interests or their artistic dreams,—drugged as they were by admiration for their past, blinded by the splendour of their arts, the magnificence of their courts,—succeed in realising themselves as Scions of Rome, and the triumph of letters cost them their fatherland.

Foreign peoples had conquered Italy, political interest was absent; if we had wars and plots which made havoc of the country, it was only because princes and tyrants pursued the particular interests of their own families. There was no feeling of nationality, no consciousness of our fundamental unity; sheer individualism was reigning in political as well as in social life. There was no regular army, but only mercenary troops which offered their services to the best payer, ready to turn traitor whenever they should find a more generous master. It was therefore only too natural if the popular army collected by the famous secretary of the Florentine Republic, Nicolas Machiavelli, proved quite inadequate for the heroic deeds to which it was called. The faith itself which had permeated the middle ages was disappearing; life had no more its goal, and its justification

in the Great Beyond that Dante had glorified; it was no more that arena from which the human soul can return, in all its purity, to the feet of the Creator; or, overcome by the devil, prepare for eternal perdition. The Popes themselves were the best patrons of humanism, and the Roman court, with its splendour, its pomps, its corruptions, could not claim to be the best interpreter and repository of evangelic tradition.

This was not atheism, but something worse,—it was religious indifference. The Italian people respected religion by inertia; they followed the formal part of religion; but, more especially as to the higher classes, they were inwardly pagan. It was the realm of beauty and of art, of pure imagination, which appealed to them. While Germany had her religious struggles, and France knew the horror of the night of St. Bartholemew, Italy was enduring the counter-reform with the greatest indifference, not because she was deeply catholic but because, to her, religion was more a formal question than a substantial one. "Religion," said Giordano Bruno in a quite outspoken manner, which was perhaps one of the principal reasons of his martyrdom, "is only a good means of restraining and subjugating the people".

TO THE POETS OF TO-DAY

O brother-poets of to-day
In unbelief we sing,
No deep-flame vision's certain ray
Our speech informs ; no gift we bring
From Halls of Silence, minting human strife
In golden words, that spell in flame the mystery of life.
 So languishes our tree of poesy,
Raised by no sap of kindling certainty
 To high authority.

Only we scorn
The unexamined faith ; the sickly morn
Of easeful half-truths ; facile, blind belief ;
Choosing deliberate uncertainty and grief.
We root up, prune, re-graft, we scatter seeds about,
The reapers of the future, they shall reap our doubt.

Jehangir J. Vakil.

THE LIVING BHAGAVADGITA.

*A Review**

By DR. C. KUNHAN RAJA.

The wide gulf that separates the present India from her past,—a gulf that was the result of an earthquake in the region of Indian History about a century ago, by which the traditions of a long civilization and culture were cut off entirely, owing largely to the aversion of the people themselves from their past culture, but helped by the indifference of the foreign administration,—has been getting wider and wider till it has deprived us of a safe footing behind our lines; it is making it impossible for us to press forward in our battle of life while cutting us off from all supplies and ammunitions from Headquarters.

Since we are not sure of a safe ground behind, to which we can retire in case we are hard pressed, we are not bold enough, though many are not conscious of the weakness, to advance with resolve and confidence. We are compelled to be on the defensive on a narrow ridge, perhaps to be thrown at any moment into the deep abyss behind, unless we are able to restore communications and get into touch with our friends on the other side.

It is not the economic drain, not the gradual destruction of our martial spirit, not the introduction of foreign ideas and ideals, not the absence of industry, not the illiteracy of the masses, not the presence of foreign rulers,—it is none of these that is the real danger to India. They are all only symptoms of a far more dangerous disease behind, in the lack of a really cultural and ennobling education,—I do not say among the masses, but even among the chosen few who are to lead the nation in her struggle for her legitimate place in the world.

*Introduction to the Bhagavadgita by Prof. D. S. Sarma—Ganesh & Co., Madras.

There is no real education that widens our outlook upon life, that enables us to look across the vast expanse of time left behind us in our history, to see across this vast expanse the hands of help stretched out by our great ancestors, to visualise the familiar faces, of brethren, friends and relatives, far removed from us in time. Such an education alone,—through the revealment of such an outlook upon life,—enables us to feel friendship, kinship, and brotherhood across vast regions of space, across oceans and mountain barriers, and it is the sole necessary preliminary for a sense of universal brotherhood.

There are not a few in India, who, though they have received the highest available instruction, think that India burst forth like a May-fly only on the previous night, as a part of the British Empire. For lack of the vision given by their traditional culture, they are not able to see far in advance of themselves; they live and move in a narrow circle, and have a distrust of everything coming from outside it. When they are forced to look beyond, they feel giddy and faint-hearted. Thus the recent history of India is a sad tale of mediocrities, of make-shifts and of indecisions in all walks of life,—politics, commerce, industry, scholarship,—everywhere.

Professor Sarma has made a right beginning in his own modest, silent, but still decided way. He has shown that even Government educational institutions afford ample scope for work to a sincere and competent servant of the country. He does not believe in lime-light, in dazzling prospectuses and programmes and in exaggerated reports. He knows that such labour is to be tested only by the new outlook upon life which the young men under his care will develop in themselves as a result of their contact with his ideals and his personality.

The real patriots India, the saviours of our unhappy land, are to be produced, not in any and every institution with the label of nationalism, but in those institutions only where grand ideals prevail, where both teachers and students are compelled, by the force of the attractiveness of such ideals, to live up to them, no matter whether the institution is maintained by the

Government or is independent of State aid. Professor Sarma has made an earnest start. Grand ideals emanate from individuals and not from a democratic commune,—that was ever the case,—take Buddha, Christ or Mahommed. Democracy has rather ruined ideals.

“The Introduction to the Bhagavadgita” consists of a series of lectures that the author delivered to the students of the Presidency College Hostel, of which he is the warden. It is not really a dry series of lectures to be drowned in the current of life, or forgotten the day after. They are talks to the students, to which the winning personality of the lecturer has given new value. I know personally what influence the author’s ideals have had on the mind of the young men under his guidance and inspiration.

“The aim of the book is, frankly, to make the students lead a life of high purpose” (*preface*). Professor Sarma has thus selected the right text to be placed before the youth of India. “The Bhagavadgita has been translated into many important languages, not at the instance of any propagandist mission, but because the need was really felt among disinterested scholars”. So, unlike sectarian scripture, it has become a guide and a solace to the whole human race.

The student is advised “to go through the bare text several times without any commentary, marking all the passages that appeal to him most and bringing his inner life to bear on them.” A difficult word here, a technical term there, an obscure passage, some apparent incongruities, or unacceptable theories,—these should not detain the reader. It is not a perfect text at the first glance. That it cannot be, for if it were, it could not be a philosophy of life. Life is full of contradictions, of riddles, and obscurities. But that does not dissuade us from studying human life with all its problems.

It is not always the most obvious things that are the most important. When we see things partially, when only the very obvious strikes our eyes, we do not see the order, the unity in them. But when we concentrate ourselves on it, meditate on

it, become one with it, then the finer threads that bind the various parts together, at first invisible, come into our view; the gaps and holes are gradually filled up by tiny particles and a finished, perfect whole, a single unit, not a jumble of detached and mutually inconsistent parts, emerge.

One cannot learn and enjoy the beauty of a work of art by analytical methods. The same is true of the Bhagvadgita. Read the text over and over again; the inconsistent parts soon come together and they are unified into a single, harmonious whole. This is the experience of those who have already followed the advice of Mr. Sarma, among whom I claim to be one. The advice is true of all great works, and I am prepared to extend the advice beyond the field of the Gita, though the author does not seem to favour that course.

Referring to his text the Author says: "We clearly see three different figures of Krishna at three different levels. We have Krishna asking Arjuna to pray to Durga, we have Krishna standing as *Bhagaván* himself, and we have Krishna enticing Karna in vain to desert the Kaurava side. It is difficult to believe, in spite of the resemblances of style and language, that three such different portraits are by the same hand." To me it is clear that those who do not see the identity of these three portraits miss the links that hold them together. To those devoted to the meditation upon Krishna for years, the same Lord is seen in all these three pictures; for them there is no inconsistency.

Professor Sarma confesses that "a philosopher in the 19th century has to base his system on the theory of evolution." The theory of the evolution of the Mahábhárata in this book may help to make it acceptable to those who claim descent from apes and monkeys. Apart from that, the book is sure to be a source of real inspiration to those who love to be associated with the Divine, who love to think of the godly in man, not the remnants of lower species in him.

The author knows, in spite of his Darwinian tendencies, that "the world has sprung from God. We know that its attractions rouse us to action. And we know also that, until

we have resisted it with the strength of our souls, we have not 'trodden the path' ". The whole philosophy of the Gita is compressed into the little sentence: "We know we are higher than the things of the world." This indeed is its key-note. The "we" represents a unitary experience. It is not the subject alone. It is the sum total of the whole experience. The mistake comes in when we limit the "we" to the subject and relegate the objects of experience to the outside of "we". This narrow view leads one to the belief that the experiencer is smaller than his experience, which stretches far out on all sides of him.

The Gita advises us to rise above this littleness of mind, to look upon the objects of experience as parts of us and smaller than us, to be free from the notion of pleasure and pain overcoming us. This is its refrain: *to rise above the conflicts of pleasure and pain*. These opposites are below us, subject to our control, if only if ye exert the right sort of control; and they should not be allowed to dominate us.

In this attitude of mind, one should read the Gita over and over again. Everything that comes across your eyes may not agree with your notions of science and philosophy. Every age has its own theories. "Every religious teacher has to make use of the scientific knowledge of his times. A preacher belonging to the Middle Ages in Europe cannot but express his belief in Ptolemaic astronomy and the theory of humours. A philosopher in the nineteenth century has to base his system on the theory of evolution. The philosopher of to-day makes use of the theory of relativity and the electrical theory of matter. It is bigotry to insist on faith in the scientific theories current in his time, he will do well to suspend his judgment, and not run to hasty and irrelevant conclusions". No better guidance could be given to a man who takes up the Gita for special study, so far as his attitude is concerned.

There are many so-called educated men in India at present who are under the misguided impression that our ancient literature can give us no help in our problems of modern life.

Those who know absolutely nothing of Indian literature are the most noisy in such condemnations. They believe that our ancients concerned themselves more about things beyond life, beyond the earth and its realities; and that, to understand life and be sensible to its true problems, we must go to modern European literature, by which they understand mainly English poetry. Those among our "scholars" who write the "History of Indian Philosophy" only make matters worse by emphasising the wrong notion that the study of ancient "Indian Philosophy" and its literature serves only as a good preparation for death.

Professor Sarma gives us the right clue when he says : "The age, that gave birth to this scripture, as we have it now, was in many respects similar to ours. The special problem of India then was, as it is still to-day, how to bring about a unity in a vast mass of heterogenous population, containing various races with different levels of culture." "The ideal of a full life which takes into account all the facts of human nature doing no violence either to the flesh or to the spirit and which was as much a corrective to the monastic Buddhism of those times as it is to the materialistic civilization of to-day, was preached in a thousand different ways in the literature of the Hindu Renaissance—the epics, the code of Manu, the later Puranas".

I cannot resist the temptation here to quote Kalidasa who puts this ideal of full life in the following beautiful stanza :

*Saisavé 'bhyastavidyānām
Yāūvane visayaśinām
Vārdhakye munivrttīnām
Yogenānte tanutyajām.*

Acquiring thorough education in boyhood,
Enjoying the world in youth,
Retiring from the world as a *sanyāsin* in old age
And leaving the body in the end through *yōga*.

Professor Sarma, in concluding the second from which the above passages were quoted, makes an earnest appeal to the

students to take up the study of our ancient culture. I content myself with quoting two sentences. "If they want to equip themselves properly for that task, they should read the literature of the epic age with imagination and insight, and derive their inspiration from the great nation builders of that time". "Why, we may even say,—though in our present sinful state the statement may provoke the laughter of the gods,—that they will also be able to give a message to the world." Such appeal must touch the heart of even the most indifferent youths of India and rouse them to a serious study of ancient Indian culture.

The book is divided into 12 sections, the last covering only a page. In this small book of 108 pages, the author has examined the Gita in all its aspects,—its position in the Mahabharata, its relation to the Upanishads and the six systems of philosophy, to Buddhism and the Bhágavata religion. He has dealt with the main teaching of the Gita and discussed the question whether the central teaching is *jñána* and *sanyása* as explained by Sankara, or *bhakti* as explained by Rámánuja, or whether it is karma as explained by Tilak. His own conclusion,—the right one,—is that "the appeal is not merely to the will of man or his heart or his intellect. It is to the whole man." "It is the greatness of the Gita that it affords such a guidance, treating human life as one indivisible whole."

The author refers to "the common error of supposing that the Gita is a cold, stoic gospel, preaching duty for duty's sake. It leads also to the misapprehension that it is a gospel of asceticism which may be good enough for men of advanced age, but quite unfit for young students on the threshold of life. Well, asceticism is no bad ideal especially in these day of indiscipline and indulgence. That a Hindu student should be scared away by an ascetic ideal is the true measure of his fall." The Gita is not a scripture for any sect in particular. "With a wide toleration which is both the strength and the weakness of Hinduism, the author of the Gita tells us that the worship of all the deities is only a worship of *Isvara*".

Professor Sarma discusses in great detail the question

whether the Gita sanctions war, and concludes that, "the Gita neither advocates war, nor condemns it. It is more concerned with the general question how a man should view his duty as a part of the will of God and discharge it selflessly."

The book is very aptly prefaced with a quotation from Mahatma Gandhi which I reproduce :

I must confess to you that when doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon I turn to the Bhagavadgita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the Bhagavadgita.

This high testimony as to the living value of the Gita, coming from a saint like Mahatma Gandhi, must appeal to every man, whatever his political views, whatever his differences from Mahátmáji so far as his recent activities are concerned.

I have given copious quotations from the book to give the readers a fair idea of the scope of the book and its general tendency. If I am asked to give my opinion on it in a sentence, I cannot do better than quote this line from Bharavi :

*Upapattir uddhrtá balád
Anumánena na chágamah kshatah
Iyam idrg anigamayah
Prasabham vaktum upakrameta kah.*

Strong arguments are put forward, but rationalism has not tampered with authority.

Who but a man of his mental calibre would be bold enough to start such a discourse?

NOTES AND COMMENTS

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

When I was a child, God also became a child with me to be my playmate. Otherwise my imperfections would have weighed me down, and every moment it would have been a misery to be and yet not fully to be. The things that kept me occupied were trifling and the things I played with were made of dust and sticks. But nevertheless my occupations were made precious to me and the importance that was given to my toys made them of equal value with the playthings of the adult. The majesty of childhood won for me the world's homage, because there was revealed the infinite in its aspect of the small.

And the reason is the same, which gives the youth the right to claim his full due and not to be despised. The divinity which is ever young, has crowned him with his own wreath, whispering in his ears that he is the rightful inheritor of all the world's wealth.

The infinite is with us in the beauty of our childhood, in the strength of our youth, in the wisdom of our age; in play, in earning, and in spending.

All our desires are but focussing our will to a limited range of experience. These become jealously tenacious and combative when we fail to imagine that our experience will widen. In our childhood we wished for an unbounded continuity in our enjoyment of a particular food or game and we refused to believe in the worth of a mature age which had different interests altogether. Those who build their vision of a life after death upon the foundation of desires belonging to the present life merely show their want of faith in Eternal life.

We must know that to be provided with an exact apportion-

ment of what we deserve and need, is like travelling in a world whose flatness is ideally perfect, and therefore where the fluid forces of nature are held in suspense. We require ups and downs, however unpleasant they may be, in our life's geography, in order to make our thoughts and energies fluently active. Our life's journey is a journey in an unknown country, where hills and hollows come in our way unawares, keeping our minds ever active in dealing with them. They do not come according to our deserts, but our deserts are judged according to our treatment of them.

When we come to believe that we are in possession of our God because we belong to some particular sect, it gives us a complete sense of comfort to feel that God is no longer needed, except for quarrelling with others whose idea of God differs from ours in theoretical details.

Having been able to make provision for our God in some shadow-land of creed, we feel free to reserve all the space for ourselves in the world of reality,—ridding it of the wonder of the infinite, making it as trivial as our own household furniture. Such unlimited vulgarity only becomes possible when we have no doubt in our minds that we believe in God while our life ignores Him.

The pious man of sect is proud because he is confident of his right of possession in God. The man of devotion is meek because he is conscious of God's right of love over his life and soul. The object of our possession becomes smaller than ourselves, and without acknowledging it in so many words the bigoted sectarian has an implicit belief that God can be kept secured for certain individuals in a cage which is of their own make. In a similar manner the primitive races of men believe that their ceremonials have a magic influence upon their deities. Sectarianism is a perverse form of worldliness in the disguise

of religion; it breeds narrowness of heart in greater measure than the cult of the world based upon material interest can ever do. For, the undisguised pursuit of self has safety in its openness, like filth exposed to the sun and air. But the self-magnification, with its consequent lessening of God, that goes on unchecked under the cover of sectarianism loses its chance of salvation because it defiles the very source of purity.

Religion, like poetry, is not a mere idea, it is expression. The self-expression of God is in the endless variedness of creation; and our attitude towards the infinite Being must also in its expression have a variedness of individuality ceaseless and unending. Those sects, which jealously build their boundaries, with too rigid creeds excluding all spontaneous movements of the living spirit, may keep hoarded their theology, but they kill religion.

When religion is in the complete possession of the sect and is made smooth to the level of the monotonous average, it becomes correct and comfortable, but loses the living spirit of art. For art is the expression of the universal through the individual, and religion in its outer aspect is the art of the human soul. It almost becomes a matter of pride and a sign of superior culture to be able to outrage all codes of decency imposed by an authorised religion bearing the stamp of approval of an organisation which can persecute but has not the power to persuade.

As an analogous phenomenon, we have known literary men deliberately cultivating a dread of whatever has the reputation of goodness, and also men of art afraid of being suspected as lovers of the beautiful. They rebel against the fact that what is proper and what is true in beauty and in goodness have become mixed up in man's mind. The appraisal of what is proper does not require any degree of culture or natural sensitiveness

of mind, and therefore it fetches a ready price in the market, outbids truth, becomes petty in its tyranny and leaves smudges of vulgarity upon things that are precious. To rescue truth from the dungeon of propriety has ever been the mission of poets and artists, but in times of revolution they are apt to go further,—by the rejection of truth itself.

In our epic, Rámáyana, we find that when Rámachandra won back his wife from the clutches of the giant who had abducted her, his people clamoured for her rejection, suspecting defilement. Similarly in art, fastidious men of culture are clamouring for the banishment of the beautiful because she has been allowed to remain so long in the possession of propriety.

Those who have their enterprises in the world of nature, master her forces, becoming rich in wealth and power. The greatest gain which comes across their path in their adventures is moral truth. For power is combination, and all combinations, in order to be perfect, need the help of the moral law, in which individuals acknowledge the universal principle of the good. Moral truth is most needed when men move, and move together.

But laws, whether in nature where it is physical, or in society where it is moral, are external. They are formal, lacking that deeper mystery of perfectness, which is creation; which is in the beauty of harmony in nature; which is in the beauty of love in man. Law is the channel of finitude through which things evolve without ceasing, but its meaning lies in its revolution round an inner centre which is infinite. We follow law to live; we reach the centre to find immortality.

With the truth of our expression we grow in truth. The truth of art is in the disinterested joy of creation, which is fatally injured when betrayed into a purpose alien to itself. All the great civilisations that have become extinct must have come to

their end through some constant wrong expression of humanity; through slavery imposed upon fellow-beings; through parasitism on a gigantic scale bred by man's clinging reliance on material resources; through a scoffing spirit of scepticism robbing us of our means of sustenance in the path of truth.

Consciousness is the light by the help of which we travel along our path of life. But we cannot afford to squander this light at every step. Economy we need, and habit is that economy. It enables us to live and think without fully keeping our mind illumined. On festival nights we do not count the cost of our excess of light, because it is not for removing some deficiency, but for expressing the sense of our inner exuberance. And for the same reason habit becomes a sign of poverty in our spiritual life; for it is not a life of necessity, but of expression. In our love, our consciousness has to remain at its brightest, in order to be true. For love is no mere carrying out of some purpose, it is the full illumination of consciousness itself.

It we allow our act of worship to deaden into a habit, then it frustrates itself, stiffening into mere piety which is a calculated economy of love. For worship has its worth, not in any form of action, but in a perfect outflow of consciousness, for which habit has the tendency of becoming an impediment. We grow worldly in our devotion when we imagine that it confers upon us some special advantage, thus causing pious habits to be formed and valued. For when it is a question of profit, buying in the cheapest market is the best wisdom; but when complete giving out is the sole object, then economy is nothing but cheating one's own self.

Our nature being complex it is unsafe to generalise about

things that are human; and it is an incomplete statement of truth to say that habits have the sole effect of deadening our mind. There are helpful habits that are like a channel which helps the current to flow,—open where the water runs onwards, guarding it only where it has the danger of deviation. The bee's life in its channel of habit has no opening,—it revolves within a narrow circle of perfection. Man's life has its institutions which are its organised habits. When these act as enclosures, then the result may be perfect, like a bee-hive of wonderful precision of form, but unsuitable for the mind which has unlimited possibilities of growth.

Nature is a mistress who tempts is with liberal wages—so much so, that we work extra hours for the extra remuneration. Yet in in the midst of this bribery and its temptations, man still cries for deliverance. For he knows that he is not a born slave and he refuses to be deluded into believing that to follow one's own desires unhindered is freedom. His real trust lies in his growth and not in his accumulations. The consciousness of a great inner truth lifts man from his surroundings of petty moments into the region of the eternal. It is the sense of something positive in himself for which he renounces his wealth, reputation, and life itself, and throws aside the scholar's book of logic, becoming simple as a child in his wisdom.

Our living body in its relations to the physical world has its various wishes. These are to eat, to sleep, to keep warm or cool, as necessity demands—and many others. But it has a permanent wish, which is deeper and therefore hidden. It is the wish for health. This is at work every moment, fighting diseases and making constant adjustments with changing circumstances. The greater proportion of its activities are carried on behind our consciousness. He who has wisdom in regard to his physical welfare knows this and tries to establish harmony

between the bodily desires that are conscious and this one desire which is latent. And he willingly sacrifices the claims of his appetites to the higher claim of his health.

We have our social body in which we come into relation with other men. Its obvious wishes are those that are connected with our selfish impulses. We want to get more than others do, and pay less than is our due. But there is another wish, deeply inherent in our social life, which is concerned with the welfare of the community. He who has social wisdom knows this and tries to bring all his clamorous wishes about personal pleasure, comfort and freedom under the dominion of this hidden wish for the good of others.

Likewise the obvious wish of our soul is to realise the distinction of its individuality, but it has its inherent wish to surrender itself in love to the Great Soul.

The wish for health takes into account the future of the body. The wish for the social good also has its outlook upon the time to come. They both face the infinite. The wish of our soul to be one with the Great Soul transcends all limitations of time and space. Thus in our body, society, and soul we find on the surface the activity of numerous wishes and in their depth that of one will which gives these wishes unity, leading them to peace, goodness, and love. In other words, on the one hand we have the wishes of the moment, and on the other the wish for the eternal. It is the function of our soul to unite these two and build its heaven upon the foundation of the earth.

Our energies are employed in supplying ourselves with things and pleasures. They have no eternity in their background. Therefore we try to give things an appearance of permanence by making them big. Man in his anxiety to prolong his pleasure and power tries to make additions, and we are afraid to stop, because we fear that they must some day come to an end.

But truth is not afraid to be small, to come to an end, just as a poem, when it is finished, is not really dead,—not

because a poem is composed of endless lines but because it carries an ideal of perfection. The pauses of truth have the cadence of the infinite, its disappearances are the processional arches of immortality.

No flame burns for ever. Light goes out for want of oil, is puffed out by the wind, often the lamp itself is shattered. In our fit of irritation we may say that the power of darkness is final and true, or that we create light ourselves by lighting the lamp. But the truth is that every extinction of light is to prove that the source of light is without end, and man's true power lies only in his ability to prove this over and over again.

When Buddha preached *maitri*—the relationship of harmony—not only with human beings but with all creation, did he not have this truth in his mind that our treatment of the world is wrong when we solely treat it as a fact which can be known and used? Did he not feel that its meaning can be attained only through love because it is an expression of love which waits for its answer from our soul emancipated from the bondage of self? This emancipation cannot be negative in character, for love can never lead to negation. The perfect freedom is in a perfect harmony of relationship and not in a mere severance of bondage. Freedom has no content, and therefore no meaning, where it has nothing but itself. The soul's emancipation is in the fulfilment of its relation to the central truth of everything that there is, which is impossible to define because it is in the end of all definitions.

The beauty which is in this evening sky comprehends forces tremendous in their awfulness. Yet it reveals to us the harmony which must be in the centre of all world activities, the

harmony which has a still voice which is music itself. Because we are able to take a view of this evening world where the distant and the near are brought face to face, we can see what is positively true in it—its beauty and unfathomable peace. When, through death, the deathlessness of some great life is discovered, the same vision of peace is revealed to us. The profound soul of Buddha is brought before our minds like this evening sky, and through all his struggles and sorrows, through his compassionate toil for men, we see a perfect assurance and repose of strength which is beauty. In smaller men the field of life is too narrow and therefore contradictions are too exaggerated to permit us any complete view of truth. But we may be sure, that in the currents of their lives, as they run beyond death, these contradictions are harmonised, for truth is over all, and beauty is the expression of truth.

It is given to us to reveal our soul, that which is One in us, which is eternal. This can only be done by its passage through the fleeting Many; to assert the infinity of the spirit by continual sacrifice of forms. The self being the vessel that gathers and holds, gives us the opportunity of giving up. If we believe only in *self* then we anxiously cling to our stores which causes us misery and failure. When we believe in *soul* the very inconstancy of life finds its eternal meaning and we feel that we can afford to lose.

Life's highest opportunity is to be able to offer hospitality to our God. We live in God's world and forget Him, for the blind acceptance which is one-sided never finds its truth. It is a desert which receives rain but never offers fruit in return and its receiving has no meaning. God's world is given to us: when we offer our world to God then is the gift realised.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN.

I.

Count Hermann Keyserling and his School of Wisdom at Darmstadt.

By one who has just returned from there.

(MRS. RACHEL T. KNIGHT.)

A long low building all creeper grown, and with dignified and pleasing angles to its mellow roof—this is the home of Count Keyserling's School of Wisdom. Here on the first floor a few well appointed simple rooms, a small but excellent library, and a lecture hall; that is all.

It is here that twice yearly people gather from all parts of the world, people of all kinds of views and persuasions, with all kinds of aims and objects; and for a few days,—never more than a week—they meet and mingle, they lecture and listen, they talk and discuss under the guiding influence of Count Keyserling. I nearly said: "under the shadow of his wing", but that would not do at all, for he casts no shadow; rather is he a blazing arc-lamp set on a high arch and spraying out his light in all directions, to illumine rather than to warm.

And in this ring of light and under this high arch, many people gather together, nearly always people of enlightened and cultured minds, people with a purpose in life, with a clear direction, people with a plan, even sometimes those who are aflame with a mission, or those yet rarer souls that shine with a steady purity of wisdom, which is as a dew distilled from knowledges long outgrown. They gather under this electric radius, and they see many things not anticipated by them, perhaps even not always anticipated by their leader. They perceive and they think and they find contact—more often and more lastingly with each other than with him, for he blazes on, intent only on his blazing capacity.

Fair and tall and commanding in presence is Count Keyserling, of pure Baltic Type; and with a most amazing cataract-like flow of words equal in velocity and intensity whether the tap be turned to "English", "French" or "German". His tongue seems equally nimble and at home in them all, and may be so in other languages as well; for his great forehead seems to contain the whole spinning sphere within its contours.

VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY.

Dwijendranath Tagore.

(Died at Santiniketan on the 19th January, 1926, at the age of 86.)

This is the thoughtful philosopher whose Travel Diary has recently appeared in England and America, and is already being widely read and written about; and will be so much more as time goes on, for its two tightly packed volumes cannot be read in a hurry,—they must, to be fully appreciated, be taken in moderate doses and allowed to pervade the system. The book can, with profit, be read a second time, for his thoughts are always potent and evocative of individual thought in every one who reads in and through, and not over the surface. Since writing the Travel Diary, Count Keyserling has written many other books of equal importance, but he has for the time swung round again into a stage of very close affinity to that in which he wrote the Travel Diary.

It seems that sooner or later every person of intellectual distinction comes of his free will to Darmstadt, forgathers with Count Keyserling and his interesting group, and freely departs again about his business, with a distinct gain to his own especial force of character and *élan* in life. This school should therefore prove to be the incubator that hatches or helps to mature the Leadership that Europe, that all the world, is so greatly in need of.

II.

Dartington.

An Educational Experiment.

By L. K. ELMHIRST.

This school is for adventure. It is commonly believed to-day that, except for the South Pole, the Himalayas, and the scientific laboratory, fields of adventure are closed. In earlier days man set out to discover new lands, to build empires, to fight battles, to promote business enterprise, or to develop industry. The driving force behind such adventure was almost inevitably some single dominating personality, king, general or merchant adventurer. To-day, adventure must be with people, and not at the expense of people. If such a field of adventure be still open, it exists primarily in the hearts of children, who, with their fresh powers of intelligence, invention, imagination and enterprise, embrace in themselves all the elements necessary for adventurous living. It is our aim to provide an environment in which children can exercise these powers, both as individuals and as members of a group, so that education and adventure are hardly distinguishable. This undertaking must of necessity be experimental.

In selecting Dartington as the place for such an experiment we have endeavoured to find the means of providing children with opportunities for every variety of self-expression. We hope to make use of all the natural resources of the place in the attempt to open up a realm where that special gift, with which we believe every child to be endowed, shall find an outlet, whether in his individual life or in that social life in which he shares the privileges and responsibilities of the group. For such a purpose a small community is desirable, fifty children at most. Without enlisting the sympathy and co-operation of the parent at the outset, such an enterprise would be impossible. The first members of this group, therefore, will necessarily be the children of parents who themselves are keenly interested in educational experiment.

Principles Involved.

In undertaking this experiment we have drawn upon our experience in the formulation of certain principles which are basic to the enterprise. For us it is vital that education be conceived of as life, and not as a preparation for life. The school then must have its own practical and material basis, it must in fact be a little world in itself, carrying on in a real, if elementary and simple way, the activities of the great world around it. The life of the community must then be rooted in the soil. Dartington Hall with its garden, orchard, field, farm, river and woodland can largely supply the needs of life, while its ancient buildings with their old world atmosphere and wealth of surrounding beauty, cannot fail to stir curiosity and interest in cultural pursuits. Here history, music, colour, architectural form, drama, and worship should flower naturally and bear fruit.

Like the village community of earlier times, which was in many respects self sufficient, the school community of to-day must engage in many practical enterprises. The child when left to his own devices learns by doing. By providing ample opportunity for doing, we may lead the child through practical experience to a grasp of theory that is often as astonishing as it is unexpected. Thus the child's interest will be harnessed to his capacity, and symmetrical growth will be secured.

A method of applying this principle has, under different names, been tried in many countries. The Munos School in the Philippine Islands, the Siksha Satra of Rabindranath Tagore's Visva-Bharati in India, the Travel School of Bogota, Columbia, South America, the Boys' and

Girls' Club, Enterprise and Project Work of Canada and the United States, and many other experiments of which we have no immediate experience, have all worked on this principle with results which, while they vary in their apparent success, all show that there is still boundless opportunity for profitable adventure in this direction.

The project method, as we shall call it for lack of a better term, is one which can be applied, we believe, to every field of knowledge and activity within the range of the child's capacity. It implies the following through of a definite sequence of events. It is learning by doing. A child's power to grasp facts that are immediately related to his own life is tremendous, but his power of reasoning and therefore of making good use of those facts is still only partially developed. Hence knowledge is most valuable to him if acquired at the time when he actually needs it. The project method provides an aim that is simple, definite and within the comprehension of the child, while at the same time the successful attainment of that aim demands from him an ever-increasing intellectual effort.

There are few limits to the use of this method. The project may be one in which the child engages for his own personal delight; it may be one in which a group of children combine in pursuit of a common intellectual interest; or again it may claim the attention and co-operation of the whole community. Of whatever character it is, it necessarily involves not merely an understanding and observation of events, but an actual shouldering of responsibility over a period of time, and an interpretation of the experience gained in terms of individual or social benefit, or both. For example, a poultry project which had as its aim the provision of food at market rate for the kitchen, would be one upon which two or four children could be engaged with profit both to themselves and to the community. The tasks of cleaning, breeding, cost-accounting and record-keeping would provide a discipline and an education under the watchful eye of a trained poultry-man. The question of a balanced ration opens up for discussion the whole science of nutrition; the provision of sanitary, well-ventilated and fully equipped quarters calls for a training of the hands in workshop and building departments; the keeping of proper cost accounts gives a natural basis for the study of figures and the interpretation of statistics; the use of by-products, feathers or manure, opens the way to business enterprise; the study of markets for the purchase of supplies and sale of produce leads the child beyond the bounds of his

little community and gives him an introduction to the life of the outer world. The results of such a project should not be judged primarily by its success as a business venture, but rather by what it adds to the boy's moral and intellectual growth.

A second type of project is one that might ordinarily be called a hobby. A project of this sort concerns the boy chiefly as an individual. The photography of birds, the study of plants, the writing of poetry—these are pursuits which a boy can carry on, as he does his games, for the mere joy that they give, quite apart from any utilitarian value they may have for himself and others. A boy showing a marked individual gift, and requiring more advanced training than the existing staff is able to supply, would receive assistance either through the visit of a specialist or by being sent to some centre where he could obtain the best professional help. A boy, for instance, showing aptitude in the study of classics or of history, would receive every encouragement and opportunity to enable him to enter some university.

Still another type of project involves the community as a whole and provides for the utilization of the capacity and services of all the children, without drawing them away from the continued performance of their specific duties. Such is the project of the self-governing commonwealth. The purchase, preparation and cooking of food, the washing and care of clothes and quarters, the regulation of discipline and the provision of hospitality, all these demand daily attention, the object of which is quite patent to every citizen.

Experience shows that there is no better training in the art of self-government or co-operative enterprise than in such a communal life. The proper development of the estate forms a vital part of the scheme as a whole, in that it acts on the one hand as a link with the neighbouring towns and countryside, and on the other as a perpetual source of stimulus, training and interest to the children in their own undertakings.

For the successful running of such businesses as are involved in the scientific management of farm, orchard, garden and forest, frequent recourse will be had to such local specialists as the county affords. We shall avail ourselves of every opportunity of linking our interests with those of the neighbourhood in order to avoid the danger of ever becoming a self-centred institution.

It is doubtless true that the road to the intelligence of the child lies through the senses, more especially through the hands and eyes. For this

reason handicraft will be regarded as of vital importance, involving as it does that close co-operation of hand and brain which makes co-ordinated growth possible. In this way the child will have natural access to the world of form, colour and line in the handling of stone, wood, clay and textiles.

To release the imagination, to give it wings, to open wide the doors of the mind, this is perhaps the most vital service that one being can render another. So often we attempt to stifle the dreamer for fear that he may never grow up a practical man, and yet it is to the men of imagination that we owe all that is greatest in human enterprise and discovery. Music, here, is one of our best allies, and music must bring its daily inspiration into the life of the community.

There are few children to whom the realm of emotional expression, the world of the spirit, is not a very real thing indeed. We may stimulate by discussion, by the provision of regular opportunity for music, singing, silent worship and address, we may encourage, we may sympathise, we may attempt to provide the means and the opportunity, in fact a congenial atmosphere, but if we are honest in our desire to give the child freedom to grow, we shall be very careful not to superimpose our own rules, creeds or theories.

Freedom the child must have, to adventure in the realm of song, of music, of poetry, of drama and the dance—to revel in the expression of ideas through colour, line or form, and to wander towards the limitless horizon of solitary thought and meditation, in immediate touch with nature and the still small voice within.

Curriculum.

There are three natural divisions in the course of study which we propose for each boy. First, there are those studies which centre round his life as an active member of a self-governing commonwealth, every duty and responsibility of which has its own educational value. Secondly, there is his major project directly connected with his dominant interest, shared with two or more boys and of definite value to the life of the group as a whole. Thirdly, there is the project of a cultural nature which concerns his individual growth and which may have no value for the group.

Courses of study will revolve around the following departments, the head of each department being a member of the staff,

A. Garden Department.

The activities of the garden department may, under this scheme, be threefold. The first obligation of the head of the department will be to make his garden pay as a business. He will also supervise the project work of any group of boys employed in cultivating vegetables, tending the orchard or keeping bees. Furthermore if any boy should show a taste for landscape gardening or botanical science he will be encouraged to develop this study as a separate project.

B. Farm Department.

This department will also be run as a business and will supervise projects in poultry, dairy, crop and livestock. There will be close co-operation between this department and the local agricultural college.

C. Building Department.

The resources of the estate will be utilized wherever economically possible by the building department. These resources include timber, marble and limestone quarries, lime kilns and a soil well suited to building in cob. From the start the boys will be given the opportunity to assist in the erection of stock shelters or garden huts on sites near their own field projects.

D. Workshop Department.

This department will be concerned with the repair and simple construction work needed for the farm and garden, and will include wood and metal work.

E. Crafts Department.

The Crafts department will engage in commercial enterprise as well as in the supervision of all projects connected with dyeing, weaving, pottery, metal work and modelling. The task of the crafts department is to link the child's artistic capacity in a natural way with his daily life.

F. Music and Drama Departments.

It will be the purpose of this department to make it possible for every child to offer some contribution to the musical and dramatic life of the group, whether that contribution be instrumental, vocal, rhythmic or histrionic.

G. *Publishing Department.*

A magazine edited and written by the boys will form their outlet for expression in English. The technique of letter press, designing, binding and printing will also be learned in this department.

H. *Language Department.*

By means of an annual camp in France boys will have an opportunity to hear and learn a foreign language. A similar opportunity will, when desired, be given for the study of German, Italian or Spanish.

I. *Social Studies Department. Geography, History, Government.*

This department, at the outset, will make a close study of the neighbourhood which will include an examination of local geography, local history, and local government. By means of camp and caravan these studies will later be carried further afield, taking up special subjects for investigation as the need arises.

J. *Health Department.*

This department, in charge of a doctor, will be responsible for the supervision of diet, hygiene, games, athletics, and health. The doctor will at the same time carry on scientific research of his own. Games will be regarded as a natural form of amusement and recreation.

K. *Accounts Department.*

This department will supervise the cost accounting of the activities of the Common-wealth as well as that of all individual and group projects.

Staff, Fees, &c.

The permanent staff will consist of men and women engaged in professional work of their own on the spot. At the same time they will head departments and supervise projects. Recourse will frequently be had to visitors whose services will be engaged as the need arises to stimulate and advise in special fields where a whole time expert would be out of the question.

Fees £100 inclusive. Every boy will be entitled to two months' holiday in the year in addition to camping trips. One of these will include Christmas Day or New Year's Day and the other will be fitted in to suit his own project work and the wishes of his parents. Boys will be able to earn their own pocket money.

III.

Sriniketan.

By N. LAKSHMANAN.

[It gives us great pleasure and encouragement to record in our Bulletin the following extract from a article in the Indian Daily Mail, of Bombay, as a true appreciation, coming from a distant Province, of the practical side of our Founder-President's work, begun over a quarter of a century ago, which has found its embodiment in Sriniketan.]

It is perhaps, not widely known that Poet Tagore has always been an ardent advocate of rural re-construction. It was an agreeable surprise to me to find, during his two memorable tours in South India that the Poet's keen interest in rural life extended to such matters as co-operative farming, cattle breeding and hand-loom weaving. Throughout his travels, he had a consuming desire to see the villagers in their rural homes and touch their very soul. In fact his sympathy for, and kinship with, the man behind the plough recall to my mind's eye the life and work of the sage of *Yasnaya Poliana*—Tolstoy.

Tagore's sympathies, whether in song or in service, are always with the companionless,—the poorest, the lowliest and the lost. Paradoxical as it may seem to many a *Khaddar* enthusiast, Tagore (though sometimes clad in silk) has as much compassion for the multitude as Mahatma Gandhi. In his letter from Shelida (dated July 23, 1915) he says: "A great proportion of our human kind is inarticulate. I find that I have quite a considerable number of friends among them. One is apt to forget them, just as one does not think of the earth on which one walks. But these men compose the great mass of life, sustain all civilizations and bear its burdens. They are content barely to live, so that others may prove that man's life is a great deal more than that which consists in mere living. They are in their place because they cannot help it. We all hope that here, science will come to the help of man." This is, however, not the pious hope of a rhymist, spinning verses in a Palace of Art from which the cries of suffering humanity are shut out. On the contrary, nowhere is the rare combination of poetry and practical wisdom seen to better advantage than in Tagore's Sriniketan, the Institute of Rural Reconstruction.

The song that nerves a nation's heart is in itself a deed, but Poet

Tagore did not rest content with singing the glories of Mother "Ind," nor the beauties of "golden" Bengal. Creative and constructive genius that he is, he first drew the attention of young Bengal to spheres of practical patriotism, and, as early as twenty years ago, he envisaged the Indian problem as a problem of rural reconstruction.

When the Bengal Provincial Conference was held at Pabna during the stormy days of the partition agitation, Rabindranath was unanimously chosen as the President because his countrymen regarded him to be above all parties. In the course of his profoundly thoughtful, statesmanlike and noble presidential address, he appealed to the young men of Bengal to devote their time and talent for village reconstruction. He subsequently elaborated his views on the subject in his remarkable paper on *Swadeshi Samaj*, which now forms part of "Greater India," recently published by S. Ganesan.

But, twenty years ago Bengal, under the sway of the then impatient idealists, was in no mood to heed the Poet's message of self-help, obsessed as she was with the mania for achieving the "miracle of political freedom" in spite of the "quicksand of social slavery." The Poet's cry was then a cry in the wilderness. And yet he preferred to plough his lonely furrow and quietly sow his own seeds. *If nobody follows thee, go thou forward alone*,—was and is the refrain of his song.

I had the good fortune to accompany the Poet on his South Indian tour, and from his son and son-in-law, who have had years of training in Agriculture in America, I obtained glimpses of rural Bengal which have convinced me that, contrary to the general outside impression, idealism is a practical creed of Young Bengal.

Mahatma Gandhi has rightly condemned the tendency to give India a model farm which can be 'no model for the penniless Indian farmer'. Had Poet Tagore been a believer in the efficacy of red-tape and official sealing wax he would have resorted to the device of a standardised University as well as a model farm. As a matter of fact, he did nothing of the kind. His educational statesmanship saved him from both the pitfalls. That Tagore is one of the foremost among the educational reformers of the world is evident from the fact that the Visva-bharati founded by him is not an imitation of any foreign University but a *Tapovana* or sylvan sanctuary whose inmates, inspired by the age-long chant of *Santam Sivam Adwaitam*, never forget *Bharata-Sakti*, the Spirit of India.

Visva-bharati is a unique centre where there is a perpetual flow of

reason and feast of soul not only between the Guru and the disciples, but extending to the unlettered tillers of the soil as well. Poet Tagore's subtle but immense generalization that the University life should be wedded to the soil on which and from which the University itself springs, is confirmed by no less a humanist and culture-hero than Professor Patrick Geddes himself, of whom Mr. C. F. Andrews says that this intimate connection with Mother Earth is also the pivotal point in the Geddesian conception of a true University.

Professor Geddes adumbrated a similar scheme sometime before the foundation of Tata's Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore. Nevertheless the Geddesian plan remained in abeyance till Sri-Niketan, the Visva-Bharati Department of Rural Reconstruction, came to represent the first Research Institute of its kind, where the workers live in the village and spend their time and energy, not in doing for the villager what he can do for himself, but in stimulating and encouraging him in the art of self-help.

